

*History of
Black Rock*

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History of Black Rock, 1644-1955,



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History of Black Rock

Compiled by

DR. IVAN O. JUSTINIUS

for

BLACK ROCK CIVIC AND BUSINESS MEN'S CLUB, INC.

Bridgeport, Connecticut

*Organized 1927
for the purpose of
promoting the Black
Rock Section*

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*The Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club, Inc.,
as sponsors of this publication, "History of Black
Rock", dedicate this book to the people in Black Rock
who through pride in their community have over the
years given freely of their time and effort in its behalf.*

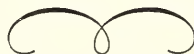
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PREFACE

This Book was prepared for the Black Rock Civic Business Men's Club as a civic project to record for posterity the history of Black Rock through photographs, maps and interesting articles.

The Black Rock history covers three hundred years, the first hundred years from 1645-1744, spans a period of raw land pioneering, hunting, fishing, clearing land, farming. The usual Indian troubles, witch hanging and burning were also a part of this era.

The second hundred years, 1745-1844, covers a period primarily featuring the sea, shipping, over sea trading and ship building. Old records show that in 1820, of less than 100 people (including men, women and children) 28 were at sea, one-half of them were captains. The Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 left much effect on Black Rock.

The third hundred years, 1845 to the present, is more difficult to align with any one outstanding occupation. Throughout some of the early years of the last century, the sea continued a strong influence upon the people's livelihood, but gradually, following the advent of the railroad through Fairfield and Bridgeport, and the emergence of Bridgeport as a dominating port, the townsmen swung to other pursuits largely connected with manufacturing and commercial activities of the nearby city.

History is vague concerning the significance of different public meeting places which existed during the first two hundred years. There were no local churches. Frequent mention of taverns is made. Probably the village store or blacksmith shop wielded considerable influence. With the coming of the church in 1840, it became the religious center, as well as the social and political center of the area. The first World War brought the beginning of the present-day Black Rock, and building and industry have since filled Black Rock with homes and factories. The homes range from the mansion-type residences to small one-family dwellings.

In gathering material for this book, I was fortunate in being able to obtain a great deal of information from the libraries of Black Rock, Bridgeport, Fairfield and Southport. Also, of great aid were the Historical Society of Bridgeport, (Bishop Room) and the Fairfield Historical Society. Some of the books that were helpful were: "Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield" (Lathrop); "Old New England Town" (Childs); "Secret Road" (Lancaster).

Many of the pictures and old maps were unearthed by native Black Rock residents from their family albums, trunks and attics. I was also able to reach

old Black Rock residents who had moved from Black Rock forty or fifty years ago but still held fond memories of their birth-place and home.

This step by step assembling of photographs and facts was conducted completely as a non-profit venture in civic interest over a period of five years.

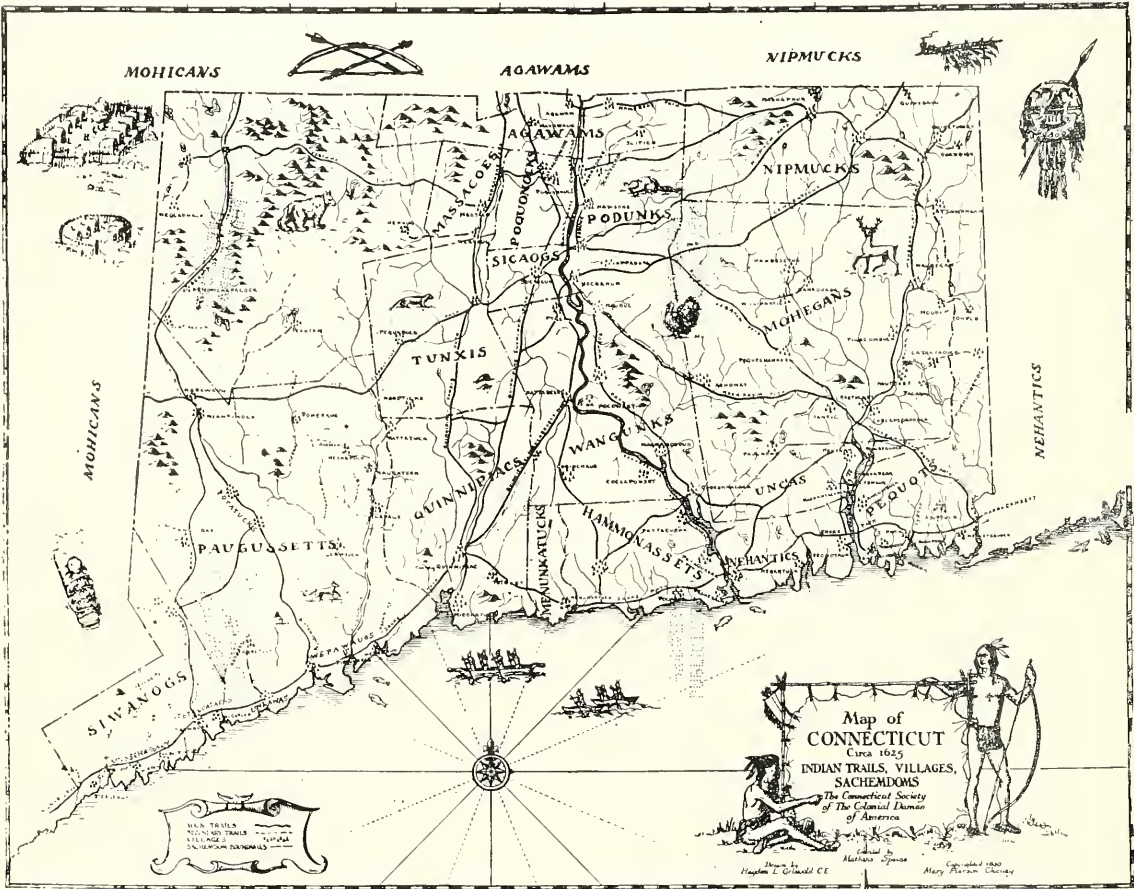
So many have been the sources and so generous the cooperation that it is difficult to make due acknowledgment to everyone who has assisted in the compilation of this book. I am particularly indebted to the following:

MRS. ONI ANDERSON	MR. ARTHUR JENNER
MR. ALBERT BORGMAN	MRS. CLARA PIERCE
MR. ARNOLD BORGMAN	(<i>Bpt. Public Library</i>)
MISS SARA BRADY	MRS. VERA PRIESTLY
ATTORNEY CHARLES BRODY	MR. NELSON HARRISON
MR. STEPHEN BARMORE (<i>Southport</i>)	MR. WILLIAM ST. GEORGE
MR. THOMAS COLWELL	MARY DARLINGTON TAYLOR
MISS MARY DUHIGG	MISS VIRGINIA HALL
MRS. EDNA H. FORSYTH	MR. FRANK J. CLARK
(<i>Fairfield Historical</i>)	MR. GEORGE F. ANTONIAK

It is sincerely hoped that the readers will enjoy this history through Black Rock as much as I did in preparing it for them.

BLACK ROCK 1955

DR. IVAN O. JUSTINIUS



Indian Trails, Villages, Sachemdoms of Connecticut
Circa 1625

CONNECTICUT INDIANS

We cannot know what transpired among the Indians here in Connecticut in prehistoric times. Old records, notes, letters, early manuscripts and books written many years ago by men and women who lived in Connecticut have brought some historic facts to light.

At the time of the first white settlement of the east coast this territory was occupied by a branch of the Algonquin tribe, known generally by the name of Mohicans (Mohawk) and particularly in the southeastern part of Connecticut as Mohegans. The shore of Long Island Sound was their habitat; here they lived for countless generations, hunted, fought and lived in their own way until the white man came and dispossessed them of their native soil.

The Algonquins were a tribe of North American Indians dwelling principally in the valley of the Ottawa River and around the tributaries of the St. Lawrence. The chief tribes composing this nation of Indians were the Algonquin, Malecite, Micmac, Nescapi, Pennacook, Fox, Kickapoo, Delaware, Cheyenne, Conoy, Cree, Mohican (Mohawk), Massachusetts, Menominee, Miami, Misisaga, Mohegan, Nanticoke, Narragansett, Nipmuc, Ojibway, Ottawa, Pequot, Potawatomi, Sac, Shawnee, and Wampanoag. The Algonquin was one of the strongest of the Indian nations and it was with members of this tribe that the early settlers of Connecticut had most to do.

We can rightfully assume that the Indian Territories in Connecticut changed, and the boundry lines were altered after the Mohawks of New York practically conquered the Connecticut Indians as far eastward as the Connecticut River. The Pequots, originally part of the Mohawk tribe, made this conquest only a few years before the first white men came.

The Paugusetts were one of the largest tribes in Connecticut, the early records of Stratford and Milford prove that all the clans that inhabited what are now the towns of Bridgewater, Roxbury, Woodbury, Middlebury, Waterbury, southward to the coast were members of this tribe. The clans appear in the later records under such names as Wepawaug, Unkawas, Potatucks, Pomerang, Naugatuck, Pequonnock, and others. It is plainly evident that these people called themselves Paugusetts until the white settlers began to call them by local names.

Their territory had no exact northern boundry as none of the Connecticut Indians would venture to live as far north as what is now Litchfield. The New York Mohawks claimed it as part of their hunting territory and the Mohawks were their deadly enemies.

Paugussetts — seems to be derived from Pog-Kussit — which denotes a swift current in a river, where the channel is descending a rapid. Pequonnocks means cleared field or opened ground.

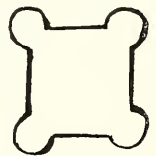
UNCOWAY INDIANS — UNKAWAS — UNQUOWA

They occupied all the land from the cove of Burr Creek, near State Street and Fairfield Ave., junction, to Fairfield, including all of Black Rock and Ash Creek (Uncoway River). The land was old Indian planting fields, one field north of the cove in Black Rock Harbor covered all the flat land east of Ash Creek. A large part of their settlement of tepees and wigwams was where Ellsworth and Fairfield Ave. meet. Later the Indians built a fort at this spot which was present even in the time of Thomas Wheeler 1644.

The Uncoway were a friendly tribe, maybe because of their abundant food supply, good fields, plenty of fish and a good natural protection in land and water. The clan never became strong because the law of the Paugussetts of which they were part, forbade the intermarriage with the clan — but allowed marriage within the tribe. This was no doubt a foresight by the Paugussetts tribe to keep the clans from becoming strong and breaking away as was evident in the Pequots coming from the Mohawks.

The Indian fort was garrisoned by about 200, and had been built for their defense against some of the interior tribes with whom they were perpetually at war.

The fort was about an acre in size and was composed of palisades joined together. At each corner a room was built out with portholes like the following figure.



Some of the young Indians were war-like and often solicited the old Indians for permission to destroy the English. Once it was obtained on one condition that they pull up a large white oak tree. The young Indians went to work, stripped off its branches, but the trunk baffled their utmost endeavors. "Thus" says the Old Sachem, "will be the end of your war — you may kill some of their papooses, but the Old Plagney Stump t'other side of the great water will remain and send out more branches."

In 1681 the Indians sold their fields to the town of Fairfield thus ending the Indian occupation of Black Rock. The last Chief who claimed sachemship over the whole tribe was Konkapatanank who died at his home in Derby 1731.

In spring of 1636 the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony commissioned Roger Ludlow and seven others "to govern the Colony of Connecticut for the space of one year." Toward the close of that year, Mr. Ludlow called a General Court to meet at Hartford "to consider the necessary steps to be taken for the protection of the infant settlement on the Connecticut River." For some time the Pequot Indians had maintained a threatening attitude toward the white invaders of their domain and the court called by Ludlow declared war against that tribe. A levy of troops was also made upon Hartford to furnish forty-men, Windsor, thirty, and Wethersfield, eighteen. The whole force of eighty-eight men was placed under the command of Capt. John Mason.

The first meeting between these Indians and the white men occurred during the summer of 1637 when Captain Mason and Lieutenant Davenport surrounded the Sasco Swamp in Fairfield and killed or captured a portion of the Pequot tribe which had sought refuge there. Also it is said that the Indians then living in the vicinity were fined for harboring the Pequots.

Mr. Ludlow accompanied the expedition into the Indian country and was so favorable impressed with the region now included within the Town of Fairfield that he determined to found a settlement there. Accordingly he made application to the General Court, which in the spring of 1639 gave him and four others a commission "to begin a plantation at Pequonnock," as the place was then called. On May 11, 1639, a treaty was made with the Pequonnock Indians, supplemented by another treaty on the 24th of June following, by which Ludlow and his associates were granted permission to settle on "a strip six miles wide along the coast from the southwest line of Stratford to Sasco Fields."

One account of the early settlement of Fairfield says that the first thing Ludlow did was to call a council of the sachems and head men of the Indians "purchased all the lands lying west of Stratford to the Sasqua or Mill River, and from the Mill River southwestward to the east bounds of the Maxumux Indian lands, and from the Sound seven or eight miles into the wilderness."

Many writers have claimed that in almost every case the land around Stratford and Fairfield was purchased from the Indians by the white men, but there is little to substantiate this belief. On the other hand, valuable authorities and records give the information that the land was not at first purchased, but for twenty years or more was considered conquered and deeded territory, and so declared by the General Courts. Afterwards, through friendliness, the land was acquired from the Indians by agreements and deeds with the ultimate object of ousting the red man.

The settlements at Stratford and Fairfield were under the supervision of Connecticut and were separate from the New Haven Colony. The land was granted to the settlers by the General Court, to which body the Indians had given it in 1638. As to the purchase of the land by the whites every record shows that no deeds were made until 1656. There is nothing said upon either of the town records and in 1681 when the final sale was made no deeds prior to 1656 are mentioned.

In 1656 the General Court at Hartford made the following record: "This Court at the request of Stratford, do grant that their bounds shall be twelve miles northward, by Paugusett River, if it be at the disposal, by right, of this jurisdiction." The Pequonnock Indians opposed the right of Stratford to this land. The Stratford settlers were anxious at this time to have their boundaries fixed by the court as a tract of land had been sold by the Indians in the western part of Fairfield and trouble had arisen between them and the white men, due to the fact that settlers' cattle and hogs destroyed the Indians' corn. Another factor which contributed to the Stratford settlers' desire to have a definite understanding was the number of Indians in Fairfield, who were constantly being crowded into Stratford territory by the Fairfield residents. Prior to this time the General Court had attempted to settle the boundary question between Fairfield, Stratford and the Pequonnocks; also to compel the Indians to pay tribute to the Connecticut Court as conquered and protected subjects, which duty they had shirked at every opportunity.

In addition to this failure to pay proper tribute the Indians exhibited signs of hostility in many ways and committed depredations many times. From 1643 to 1655 their warlike attitude became so threatening that the settlers kept troopers on guard at night and on Sundays, also called out the militia several times. The Indians demanded money in turn for their lands and the Indians at Milford claimed a portion of the Stratford land. However, the claim of Ansantaway, the chief then at Milford, proved to be of little strength for he gave a deed for all the land his people claimed on the west side of the Housatonic and agreed to accept in return whatever the English desired to give. The following order will show the effort made by the Connecticut Colony to settle the differences between the whites and reds:

"Hartford, March 7, 1658-59. By the Court of Magistrates. This Court having taken into consideration the business respecting the Indians, pertaining to the plantations of Stratford and Fairfield, and finding in the last agreement made with the Indians while Mr. Willis and Mr. Allen were down there, that those two plantations aforementioned are engaged to assure and allow unto

those respective Indians pertaining to each town sufficient land to plant on for their subsistence and so to their heirs and successors:

"It is therefore ordered by this Court, and required that each plantation forementioned exercise due care that the agreement made by the magistrates be fully attended without unnecessary delay, so that the Indians may have no just cause to complain against the English, but rather may be encouraged to attend and observe the agreement on their parts, that peace may be continued on both sides; and further it is desired that the Indians may be allowed to improve their ancient fishing place which they desire.

"To the constables of Stratford to be forthwith published and sent to Fairfield to be published and recorded by the register."

Three days later the Court took further action in substantiating the claims of the Indians in Fairfield and allowed them planting land for the future. The settlers of Fairfield were also ordered to consider them as legal residents of the "plantation."

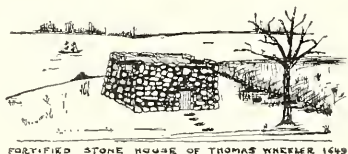
Not immediately did the three-sided problem come to solution. A cleared space of ground to the east of the Uncoway River (Ash Creek) became a much disputed point. The land in this space had been cleared by the Indians for planting and in all was a very desirable piece of ground. The possession of this land was one of the principal reasons the Fairfield settlers wished the Indians crowded over into the Stratford territory. The old line was retained, however, while a reservation was set aside on Golden Hill for the Indians. The latter retained their old planting field at the head of Black Rock Cove until 1681, when they sold it to Fairfield.

In the spring of the year 1659 the land question before Stratford and Fairfield was brought to the General Court at Hartford and decided. The Indians agreed to the following: that if the English settlers could prove that they had received the land by purchase, gift or conquest, it should be theirs. A number of witnesses gave testimony and the Court decided in favor of the plantations. The affidavits given by the witnesses are recorded in the town book under the caption, "a record of several letters presented to the Court at Hartford, whereby together with other evidences the Town of Stratford, proved, and the Court granted a clear right to their land in preference to Pequonnock Indians with whom they had to do."

The colonists lived in constant fear of attack and many times, even at late as 1724, the General Court dispatched troops to Fairfield County for protection gainst possible outbreaks. In the plantations of Fairfield and Stratford, also in Norwalk, Stamford and Greenwich, the white settlers were

outnumbered fully five to one by the Indians. Not only this, but the English were poorly prepared to resist a combined attack. Their lives were undoubtedly in severe danger, augmented by the trouble between the Dutch and Indians at New York. Doctor Trumbull wrote of an incident occurring near Fairfield as follows:

"In the year of 1644 the Indians were no more peaceable than they were the year before. Those in the western part of Connecticut still conducted themselves in a hostile manner. In the spring they murdered a man, belonging to Massachusetts, between Fairfield and Stamford. About six or eight weeks after the murder was discovered, the Indians promised to deliver the murderer at Uncoway (Black Rock), if Mr. Ludlow would appoint men to receive him. Mr. Ludlow sent ten men for that purpose; but as soon as the Indians came within sight of the town, they, by general consent, unbound the prisoner and suffered him to escape. The English were so exasperated at this insult that they immediately seized eight or ten of the Indians and committed them to prison. There was among them not less than one or two sachems. Upon this the Indians arose in great numbers about the town exceedingly alarming the people both at Fairfield and Stamford. The Indians were held in custody until four sachems in those parts appeared and interceded for them, promising that if the English would release them within a month they would deliver the murderer to justice."



THOMAS WHEELER, first settler of Black Rock — 1644

Thomas Wheeler, the elder, came from Concord, Mass. with a company of other pioneers in 1644. His companions settled in Stratfield and in Greenlea — as the section near Seaside Park in Bridgeport was then known. Thomas Wheeler separated from and established his home at the head of Black Rock harbor. Here he was a short distance across the waters of "shipharbour creeke" from his relatives and friends at Greenlea, and not too far from Fairfield. The earliest recorded settlers at Greenlea and Black Rock are: Ephraim Wheeler; Thomas Wheeler; Thomas Wheeler, Jr.; William Odell; John Evarts; Joseph Middlebrook; James Bennet; Peter Johnson and Benjamin Turney.

The first Wheeler homestead was surrounded on three sides by water and stood on a rise of ground overlooking the level plain to the west. Thomas

built his house of stone with a strong plank roof, and upon this roof, to supplement the natural advantages of his location, he placed two small cannon. One pointed out down the harbor against possible Dutch invasion by sea: the other was directed toward the Indian fort that stood north of the little hill. The Indians were friendly and the Dutch were invisible, but Thomas Wheeler was a cautious man.

This Wheeler "homelot" at the "head of shipharbour" was the nucleus of Black Rock village. The village was for many years inhabited by Thomas Wheeler's grandchildren and their children almost exclusively. There were enough of them to occupy the acres between the old homelot and Grover's Hill with their houses and pasturage, and to divide other lands with nonresident proprietors whose homesteads stood in Fairfield or Stratfield.

From the Thomas Wheeler homestead a road led northwest, meeting the Fairfield road at the present intersection of Brewster Street and Fairfield Avenue. The old Fairfield road coincided with the modern Post Road only between Ash Creek and Ellsworth Street. At the latter point (near the Indian fort) the old road turned northeast (along the present line of North Ellsworth Street) to the upper creek. Here were two forks, one road led northwest across the upper creek to King's Highway and the Holland Heights Road. The other fork led to the Indian Fields and thence to Stratfield.

The early surveyors followed the trail that avoided the old Indian fort as the cautious pioneer always gave his Indian neighbors as much room as possible.

This fort, garrisoned by two hundred Indians, had been palisaded against the tribes of the interior. North and east extended the Old Indian Field as it became known in early deeds. All of this land was sold by the Indians to the town of Fairfield in 1681.

The purchase of the Indian Field ended Indian occupation in Black Rock. The Indians moved north and the new owners divided the field, as was customary, by a lottery.

John Wheeler, son of Thomas the pioneer, married first Judith Turney, and second Elizabeth Rowland, succeeding to the Wheeler property in Black Rock and adding more lands by purchase from non-resident dividend holders. Five of his sons settled in Black Rock. He served the town as representative for four terms, died in 1681, leaving twelve children, eight of them under age. John, the oldest son, assumed the family cares, and undeterred — or perhaps

fortified — by experience, married Abigail Burr, and reared thirteen children of his own. Of these only three sons, Obediah, Jabez and Ichobod, continued the saga of the Wheeler family of Black Rock.

Other families came to share with the Wheelers the homesites by the harbor. The colonial names of Squire, Burr, Penfield, Bartram, Wilson, Chauncy, Osborn, Jennings, Silliman, Sherwood and Sturges became prominently identified with the port.

The sea which played so dramatic a role in the story of the earliest settlers in Black Rock continued to influence the development of the village. The number of ships that plied in and out of the harbor increased yearly. In 1753 a new



ASH CREEK - PENFIELD MILLS - 1772

bridge and new roads were planned to shorten the distance between Fairfield center and the ship harbor.

As the map shows, the early roads were almost circuitous as their descriptions in the records. The new thoroughfare was surveyed more directly, — almost due east from lower Benson Road, across an inlet by Penfield mills, and along the shore of the creek to the new bridge. The stone foundations of this road are still plainly visible, as are the foundation piers of the bridge over which the road led to what is now Balmforth Street in Black Rock, — the short road that curves over the shoulder of Grovers Hill and joins Grovers Avenue now just as it did in 1753. Grovers Avenue had existed long before the building of the new road, but merely as a farm road from the harbor to the hill pastures. There had originally been a field gate across it halfway between the turnpike and the hill.

The opening of the shorter route immediately affected the pasture lands along Grovers Avenue. David Wheeler, III, was first to profit thereby taking over from his father ten acres of meadow. The progressive David deeded to the town two streets, to lead from Grovers Avenue to the harbor, and dividing the land into lots, he pointed their advantages to seafarers whose homes lay inconveniently far from shore. The first purchasers were Captain Joseph Silliman and Captain Thomas Holburton, and both immediately built where their families might overlook the Sound and sight their incoming ships.

Next to buy was a company of thirteen prominent citizens of Fairfield who acquired land for a wharf at the end of one of David Wheeler's new roads. Adjacent lots were soon sold for homebuilding or investment and the first real estate development in Black Rock proved successful.

Meanwhile David's cousin, Captain Ichabod Wheeler, had busied himself near the old family homestead at the head of the harbor. He had been given liberty by the town to build a new wharf there, but after embarking on the venture, decided that it might be more profitable to sell shares. He therefore reserved a one-sixth interest in the wharf, the timber, and the "well already Dugg"; and sold the other five-sixths to James Smedley, Samuel Bradley, Jr., Ebenezer Bartram, Jr., Robert Wilson, and Nathaniel Wilson. Captain Ichabod Wheeler was a shipbuilder and his son, the observant and note-taking William, tells that he built at the Upper Wharf six vessels, all above ninety tons; one, sold to Thomas Allen of New London, who went bankrupt, occasioned a loss of two hundred and sixty-five pounds — to the builder. With the others he was more fortunate.

The list of investors in the wharves and warehouses of Black Rock about that time included all of the merchant-residents of Fairfield. Three wharves were built, including the upper wharf, near the old shipyard. The Middle Wharf, already mentioned, lay midway between these and the wharf projected by Captain Samuel Squire at "Money Beach." Each of these wharves had its store or warehouse, with sheds, chandlery, and tackle for loading and unloading.



In 1819, of less than one hundred inhabitants of the village, men, women, and children, it is recorded that twenty-eight men were gone as sailors, one-half of them Captains.

Down by the shore, next to the old Middle Wharf, stood a tiny house, occupied by Wolcott Chauncey, his wife, and their nine children. Three of the boys who splashed about the piers of the old wharf were to account heroically for themselves in history.

Issac Chauncey, born in Black Rock in 1772, went to sea at thirteen, and when nineteen was given command of his first ship. He rose in rank rapidly, served in the navy as Captain during the war with Tripoli, afterward commanding the Brooklyn Navy Yard in peace time and the Great Lakes from 1812 to 1816. He was awarded a sword for gallantry in action and is one of the heroes buried in the National Cemetery at Arlington. His brothers, Captain Ichabod Wolcott Chauncey and Robert Chauncey, also served loyally in the Navy during the early years of the republic.

The Revolution and War of 1812 are covered in detail, so is the history of Black Rock shipping era;

For some 200 years Black Rock was a great port being able to handle many ships at one time. With her wharves and ship yards, it was ideal, for the sailing trade. With the coming of steamboats, which were able to go into the smaller harbor and not dependent on wind, Bridgeport which was shallower, and wind-locked became the bigger Port.

The Railroad also cut into the coastal trade of the sailing ship. There was no railroad station in Black Rock, so all the trade that formerly came through here, went to Bridgeport.

Manufacturing developments swung Bridgeport into ever-increasing production and swept prosperity from Black Rock harbor. When in 1870 an act of legislature extended the Bridgeport boundary to Ash Creek, only a few protesting voices were raised in Fairfield town meeting.

Upon the old lot where once Thomas Wheeler settled, a turpentine factory reared its tall chimney. Near the site of the old fort on Grovers Hill, a summer hotel was built. These in their turn have passed. Grovers Hill, is a "residential development,". Black Rock is no longer a quiet village, no longer a seaport — it is now the 3rd district of Bridgeport. It still has its beautiful harbor and scenic boulevard where one can view the Long Island Sound, Long Island, Fairfield, Bridgeport and Lordship. Black Rock is about 90% residential having some of the most beautiful homes in New England — there is no slum in Black Rock. The industry in Black Rock is varied, but the residences are of the most modern architecture.



FORT BLACK ROCK, — Top of Grover's Hill

February 16, 1776 "Fort Black Rock" was built on Grover's Hill commanding the mouth of the harbor. It guarded the entrance to the harbor and the Penfield Mills near the mouth of the Unquowa river, then operated by James Penfield, who daily used several barrels of flour in making bread for the soldiers.

Authorized by vote of Assembly:

"twenty-five able-bodied men be raised by volunteer enlistment . . . under the command of a lieutenant and two sergeants, be employed in erecting works of defense . . . to have the same

pay and wages as the army near Boston, and be allowed eight-pence per day for their provision and support during said term."

In July, Lieut. John Mill, commander at the fort, was "to receive two hundred pounds on account of billeting, premium for guns and blankets, and first month's pay and wages for his men."

On the Ninth of August, it was voted that:

"The selectmen of the town of Fairfield take two of the colony's cannon now at the furnace at Salisbury for use of the fort at Fairfield — one twelve-pounder and one eighteen-pounder, if such may be had, if not, then two twelve-pounders, and also one ton of shot suitable for the cannon in said fort."

Apparently the eighteen-pounder was not to be had, for we find no further mention of it.

The next appearance of the fort in the assembly records is dated two years later when an order of the colony treasurer was granted to David Squire in response to his memorial that:

"On or about 21 March 1778, he being sergeant of the company stationed at Battery Point, and in actual discharge of his duty in ramming a shot into one of the guns by the batter, the cartridge took fire, by means whereof he lost both his hands and was otherwise so greatly wounded and hurt as to lose one of his eyes."

Note: David Squire's life was saved by Dr. Francis Forgue, a Frenchman who was taken in Canada in the War of 1756. He settled in Black Rock. Dr. Forgue was an excellent surgeon. Surgeons were rare in those days. Dr. Forgue's son, Francis, established the first Printing Press and newspaper in Fairfield about 1796.



April 25, 1779 — The British captured General Silliman

The British sent a boatload of 8-10 men, passed the old fort, in the dead of night and up through Ash Creek, where they were guided by Tories to the home of General Silliman on Toilsome Hill where they captured the General and his four sons. As the boat left, the fort fired three shots from its 12 pounder but the British made their escape. The Tories, who helped in guiding the British, were caught and their land was confiscated.

THE BRITISH BURNED FAIRFIELD

July 15, 1779, about four o'clock in the morning the approach of the fleet was announced by the firing of a gun from Fort Black Rock. The fleet however seemed to be passing by and about seven o'clock all were pleased because the fleet was passing westward and steering, all thought, for New York. A very thick fog came on, which entirely hid the fleet. At about 10:00 the fog lifted, the whole fleet was along the western shore, and some of them close into shore at Kensie's Point. They laid at anchor until 4:00 p.m. when they began to land their troops. During the landing the Fort kept firing its cannon and did some damage to the landing parties, which included Hessians. Our troops stationed in Fairfield, although very few in number as compared to the invaders, did give battle and were of annoyance to the invaders in their landing. They later fell back to the Court House where they had a field piece. They shot both round and grape shots, had many muskets but were able to hold the invaders only a short time, when our townspeople retreated to the heights back of town.

The Hessians were first to let loose for rapine and plunder, they entered houses, attacked the persons of Whig indiscriminately, broke open desks, trunks, and closets, taking away everything of value. They robbed women of buckles, rings, bonnets, aprons and handkerchiefs and dashed to pieces glass, china and all kinds of furniture.

General Tryon was in charge of the British. He gave orders to burn the town of Fairfield and all but 5 houses were destroyed.

In the meantime a considerable force of militia had rushed to the scene and followed the British to their ships, firing from behind trees and fences and otherwise harassing the retreat.

The burning of Fairfield was in a measure an act of retaliation for the activity of the authorities of the town in helping to suppress the British.

Capt. Isacc Jarvis	John Meeker
Col. Elijah Hill	Samuel Patchen
Capt. David Jarvis	Abraham Parritt
Daniel Burr	Benjamin Meeker
Nehemiah Burr	John Lyon
Jessie Burr	Nehemiah Rose
Fairweather Brothwell	David Sherwood
Chauncey Downs	William Sturges
Joseph Gold	Ezra Wheeler
Silas Hawley	Robert Walch

William Hawley
Nathan Jennings
James McNay
Huldah Mason

John Wilson
David Wilson
Nathaniel Wilson

This little band of patriots kept their one gun busy as long as the enemy was within range.

One boat loaded with British soldiers rowed into the mouth of the Creek, under cover of a dense fog, and burned the Mill, Bakerhouse and the Penfield Homestead located there. The little fort raked them with fire, when the fog lifted, and drove them away. The next morning an attack was launched against the fort but it failed and the British invaders sailed away.

George Penfield (1811-1880) born in Black Rock. He married Charlotte Golding, whose father operated the Mill at Ash Creek. His daughter Virginia and her husband Captain Solly — built the house presently owned by attorney Brody. His ship carried on an extensive trade and Black Rock was its home port.

The Sarah Jane built in the Black Rock ship yards of Rew and Wathen 1853 — it was owned by R. W. Bartram.

WAR OF 1812

A second fort was built during the War of 1812 called Fort Union (Fort Green). The location was the present site of Superintendent Lyddy's home on top of Grover's Hill but the fort saw no action during the War.

The end of this war was celebrated February 25, 1815 by firing the artillery at the Fort and a parade to the Green in Fairfield.

Eight vessels lay idle in Brewster's Cove because of the War. There was an embargo on every vessel unless a bond was given for double the value of the vessel and cargo that she would not go to any port but the one she was cleared for.

BLACK ROCK HARBOR

Two harbors have served the commercial interests of Fairfield — Black Rock on the southeastern edge of the town and Southport on the southwestern. Black Rock is now included within the corporation of Bridgeport. During a period of more than two hundred years, however, it was a part of Fairfield. Here trade flourished and was defiance blazed. The little fort on Grover's Hill afforded an uncertain sense of security on various occasions. The quiet

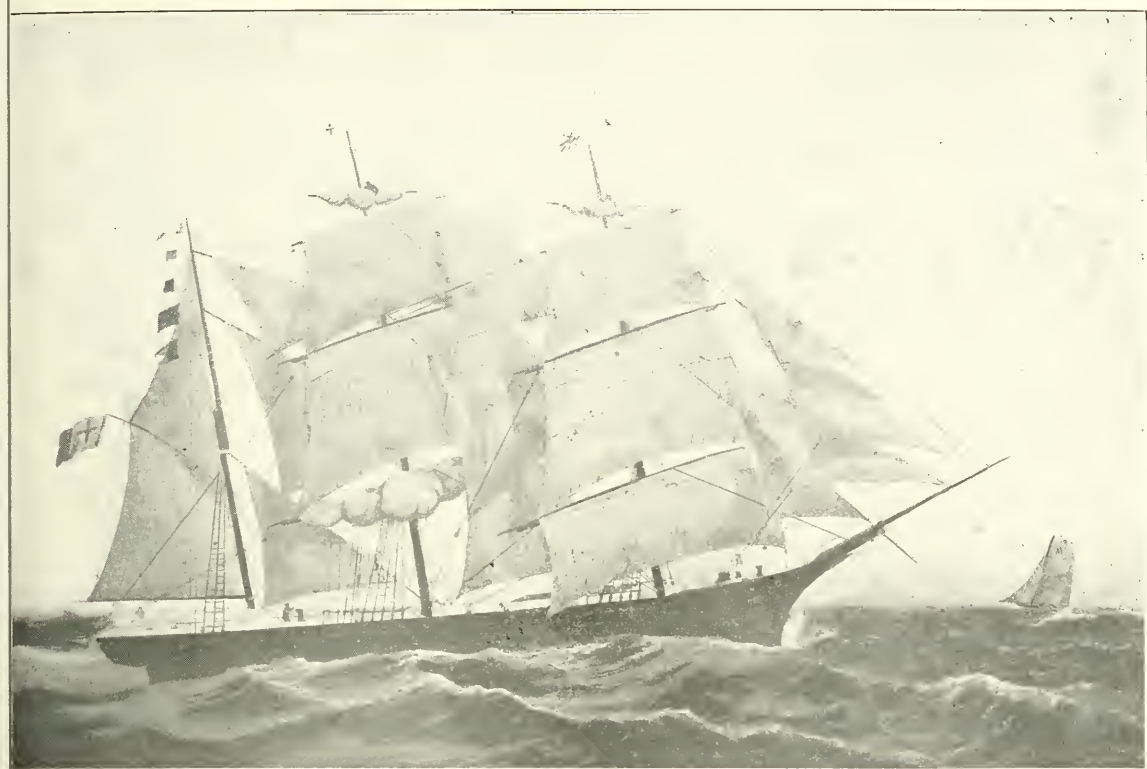
waters behind Fayerweather's Island invited ships to safe anchorage. The collector of the Port of Fairfield here exercised authority. Captains of commerce made their homes in this neighborhood. Fishermen, warriors, mariners, pleasure-seekers, builders and maritime industry have shared the life of the Port.

During the American Revolution this harbor was the scene of noteworthy activity. Colonel Parsons sailed from Black Rock on the evening of August 14th, 1777, with a sloop and six sailboats, one hundred and fifty men and a brass six-pounder in order to dislodge Colonel Hewlett who had fortified Brookhaven on Long Island.

Black Rock was a convenient place for the men engaged in whale boat warfare. Captain Caleb Brewster, one of the heroes who won enviable fame by his victories over British craft along these shores, made Black Rock his home. Many an expedition against the enemy he organized among his sailor friends. In 1781 he brought into the harbor a British armed boat and all her crew. It was December 7th, 1782, that his most desperate encounter with the enemy occurred. This is known as the "boat fight." On this particular morning several of the enemy's boats came down the Sound and Captain Brewster with his brave comrades intercepted them. It was a savage fight — a hand to hand conflict — for in twenty minutes nearly all the men engaged were either killed or wounded. Two boats were captured. Captain Brewster was among the injured. He was able, however, to continue his work a few months later. On March 9th, 1783, he captured the Fox, one of the enemy's vessels. The Fairfield Historical Society has among its treasures an elegant silver loving cup presented to Captain Brewster by admiring friends as an expression of their esteem.

These are the official shipping records of the ships that entered Black Rock Harbor. They were copied from Custom Records at the Historical Society.

1794	Tautalus	W. Gould	W. Gould & Co.	40	3/4
1794	Hiram	E. Bulkley	E. Bulkley	39	60
1793	Polly	A. Sherwood	A. Sherwood	35	1/2
1794	Harman's	S. Sturges	S. Sturges	—	—
1794	Driver	I. Bulkley	D. Perry	—	—
1794	Eliza	E. Wood	E. Wood	66	12
1794	Sophia	D. Osborn	D. Osborn	31	71
1794	Ranger	E. Bulkley	E. Bulkley	35	20
1794	12/25 Anson	S. Ketchum	S. Ketchum	26	23
1794	12/31 Charlot	I. Baker	I. Hulburt	45	53
1795	2/10 Rose	A. Sherwood	A. Sherwood	55	24
1795	4/10 Mary	B. Thorp	S. Thorp	62	74
1795	5/16 Industry	D. Beers	D. Beers	58	8
1795	6/4 Swain	W. L. Dimon	N. Peery	24	4
1795	7/27 Sophia	D. Osborn	D. Osborn	35	86
1793	9/27 Polly	A. Sherwood	A. Sherwood	35	60
1795	10/21 Huntress	J. Watson	J. Watson	99	25



Bark TRAVELLER, Geo. M. Pentfield, Commander.

BUILT AT BALTIMORE, MD., 1859.



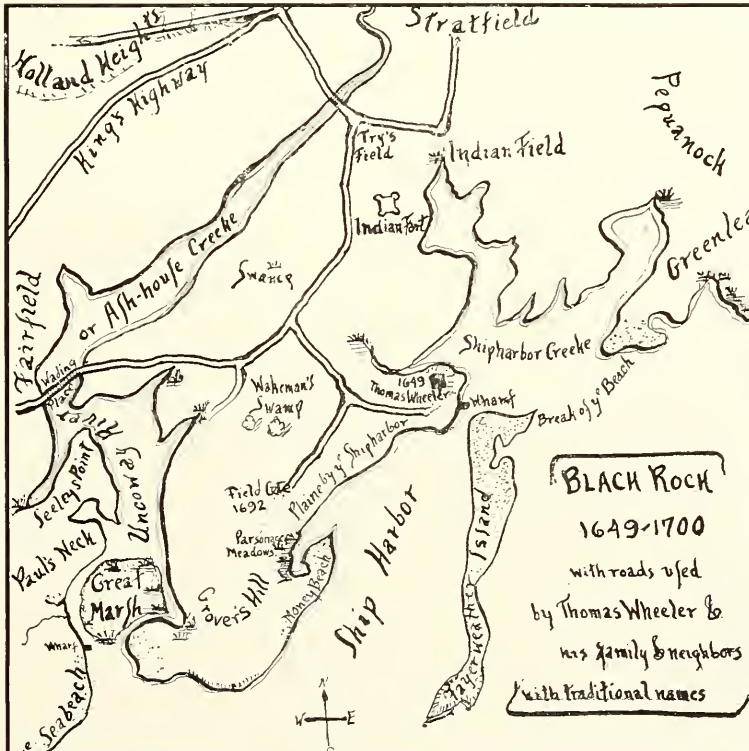
Typical of the ships that sailed into Black Rock during the shipping era.

1795	12/2	Sally	G. Allen	G. Allen	40	70
1795	12/21	Sea Flower	J. Young	J. S. Pearsall	42	89
1796	1/22	Nancy	S. Woods	D. Coley	21	57
1796	3/19	Dolphin	S. Ketchum	S. Ketchum	20	67
1796		Industry	D. Beers, Jr.	D. Beers	58	5
1796	6/29	Rambler	S. Sturges	S. Sturges	70	5
1796	6/5	Americanas	S. Wheeler	M. Perry	102	77
1796	6/25	Liberty	J. Bulkley	J. Wakeman	53	73
1797		Rose	J. Sherwood	J. Wakeman	55	24
1796	10/1	Utility	W. Thorp	W. Thorp	55	24
1796	11/19	Coquet	W. B. Dimon	W. Thorp	95	37
1796	11/24	Wink	S. Pearsall	W. B. Dimon	41	1
1796	7/5	Polly	P. K. Sheffield	S. Pearsall	44	3
1795	12/2	Sally	G. Allen	P. K. Sheffield	35	47
1794	12/12	Ranger	E. Bulkley	G. Allen	40	10
1796	12/21	Dolphin	J. Burr	E. Bulkley	35	20
1794	10/20	Driver	W. Perry	J. Burr	23	63
1797	3/22	Return	A. Nichols	W. Perry	30	33
1797	2/24	Polly	N. Squires	A. Nicklos	71	66
1789	12/9	Pocket	A. Hubbell	D. Wilson	35	47
1794	12/25	Anson	S. Ketchum	R. Hubbell	32	47
1797	4/25	Maria	D. Osborn	S. Ketchum	26	24
1797	5/27	Rambler	S. Sturges	D. Osborn	46	91
1797	6/22	Patty	W. Burr	S. Sturges	70	81
1797		Nancy	J. Young	W. Burr	23	5
1796	9/8	Industry	J. Hull	A. Andrews	21	57
1797	9/21	Delight	E. Hubbell	J. Hull	43	62
1797	9/25	Polly	D. Wilson	E. Hubbell	60	70
1794	12/9	Maria	E. Hawley	D. Wilson	35	59
1798		Polly	B. Thorp	E. Hawley	46	48
1798		Charlot	C. Wilson	S. Thorp	64	49
1798		Phebe	S. Davis	D. Wilson	45	50
1798		Polly	D. Wilson	S. Davis	22	30
1798		Seaflower	S. Pearsall	D. Wilson	35	59
1798		Ranger	G. Sturges	S. Pearsall	42	89
1798		Dolphin	M. Perry	J. Wakeman	35	20
1798		Liberty	E. Bulkley	M. Perry	23	63
1798		Rambler	A. Nichols	E. Bulkley	53	73
1798		Rose	J. S. Sherwood	O. S. Sturges	70	00
1798		Two Friends	N. Thorp	J. Sherwood	55	24
1798		Fair Trader	J. Osborn	N. Thorp	42	11
1798		Coquet	B. Sturges	J. Osborn	58	24
1799		Liberty	E. Bulkley	B. Sturges	41	1
1799		Unity	John Maltbie	E. Bulkley	53	73
1799		Columbia	E. Bulkley	J. Maltbie	22	69
1799		Emily	Paul Sheffield	E. Bulkley	30	7
1799		Mink	W. Thorp	S. Sheffield	21	84
1800		Columbia	E. Bulkley	D. Coley, Jr.	44	3
1800		Dolphin	A. Hubbell	E. Bulkley	30	7
1800		Atlanta	A. Hubbell	A. Hubbell	23	63
1800		Democrat	S. Sturges	S. Sturges	130	40
1800		Randolph	J. Hull	J. Hull	43	90
1800		Bethany	A. Nichols	A. Nichols	85	28
1800		Hunter	M. Gould	T. Hull	39	00
1800		Unity	W. Robinson	W. Robinson	42	31
1800		Akerly	S. Davis	S. Davis	22	69
1800		Liberty	S. Sturges	S. Sturges	47	55
1800		Hunter	J. Burrett	J. Burrett	53	73
1801		Dispatch	S. Morehouse	S. Morehouse	42	31
1801		May Flower	D. Osborn	D. Osborn	67	2
1801		Democrat	J. Bulkley	J. Bulkley	44	65
1801		Jefferson	J. Hull	J. Hull	43	90
1801		Julia	A. Hubbell	A. Hubbell	32	18
1801		Bonaparte	W. Thorp	A. Hubbell	27	57
1801		Catherine	R. Bangs	N. Perry	60	82
1801		Roxana	D. Wilson	N. Perry	22	41
1801		Hero	S. Reynolds	N. Perry	54	62
1801		Tryall	W. Robinson	N. Perry	55	86
1801		Abigail	S. Wood	S. Davis	39	6

1821	Concord	E. Wood	S. Davis	54	15
1814	Diana	A. Bulkley	J. Bulkley	63	28
1814	Susan	A. Burr	L. T. Downs	33	20
1811	Sally Ann	E. Burr	E. Jesup	36	86
1814	Susan	G. Burr	D. Minot	95	32
1812	Trumbull	S. Burr	E. Jesup	36	86
1816	Delight	W. Daskam	H. Nichols		
1810	Rose	D. Davis	Perry, Jr.—J. Sturges	86	7
1818	So. Carolina	E. Dimon, Jr.	Wakeman—Dimon, Jr.	58	47
1810	Diana	S. Disbrow	H. Allen	173	65
1816	Pedler	J. W. Hanford	Pearsall—Hanford	33	20
1820	So. Carolina	S. Jackson	W. Jesup	40	33
1815	Mary Ann	W. Jesup	P. Wynkeep	173	65
1813	John	P. Johnson	Johnson—L. Turney	50	89
1813	Nora	I. Odell	I. Odell	49	47
1815	Columbia	D. Penfield	S. Mallett	45	51
1798	Charlotte	M. Anthony	M. Anthony	54	35
1822	Fame	J. Baker	J. Baker	62	56
1816	Abeona	C. W. Barker	W. Thorp	76	55
1810	Fame	T. Bartram	Bartram—S. Perry	64	66
1818	Two Sisters	A. Beardsley	A. Ufford	36	18
1811	Julia	J. Beaty	Beaty—L. Nash	27	57
1811	Packet	S. Beers, Jr.	H. Nichols	34	72
1815	Morning Star	T. W. Bennett	Morgans	43	73
1812	Lion Oat	A. Benson	Benson—N. Burr	88	13
1800	Republican	B. Betts	J. Warren, Jr.	30	00
1812	Concord	D. Bradley	Bradley—J. Bulkley	63	28
1811	Nassau	J. Brewster	J. Mitchell	92	27
1813	Nora	A. Bulkley	D. Penfield	45	51
1812	Mary	A. Bulkley	J. Bulkley	71	74

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—File of FAIRFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FAIRFIELD, CONN.



WHARVES AND SHIPPING

From the pioneer days, Black Rock Harbor, sheltered by the long reach of Fayerweather Island and the quiet water behind it, invited ships to safe anchorage.

The collector of customs of the Port of Fairfield met all incoming ships.



The captains of commerce, fishermen, warriors, mariners, pleasure-seekers, and ship builders made their home in Black Rock and shared the life of the Port.

The little fort on Grover's Hill gave an added sense of security to the harbor which rated as one of the principal ports along the Connecticut shore. It was sought as a haven by yachtmen and mariners consistency because of its reputation as having the best harbor west of New London, center of extensive shipping operations. The annual volume probably exceeded those of the whole city of Bridgeport at present and was chosen as the location of the landed estates of numbers of persons of leisure and affluence. Black Rock won a distinction in its own name which has never been entirely extinguished even by its association with Bridgeport.

In Lloyd's Register and in other documents consulted by the men of the sea, you will see "Black Rock" standing on its own responsibility, and without reference to its foster parent and conservator, the city of Bridgeport. So it was in the old days, when it had a diverse allegiance, first to the town of Fairfield for 200 years, and later, within the city of Bridgeport.

Black Rock is one of the few sections of Bridgeport which has a distinct identity as a village or community. One speaks of the "East Side," or the "East End," which is indefinite, or of the "South End" or "West End," which are equally vague except to those well acquainted with Bridgeport and the way in which it is constituted. But Black Rock stands upon its own feet, and everyone knows just where it begins and just where it ends, and of what it consists. This is due, not to the community consciousness which recent residents have developed but to the renown which was won in former days.

The earliest wharves in the late sixteen hundreds were at about the site of the present Fayerweather Yacht Club. The early ship and boat building was located at this site but the full development of the harbor was slow. Between 1750-1850 the harbor had 5 to 6 large wharves as well as several ship-yards and handled a great deal of cargo. The wharves and docks were the center

of activity in Black Rock in those years, for it was from the ships which came that commerce flowed and events and happenings in the village had a close relationship with the wharves. Deacon Alanson Allen was the first storekeeper and also the postmaster of Black Rock, and it was in his general store that the sailors and the villagers used to mingle. In time, John Ogden succeeded the deacon as the proprietor of this store.

Black Rock harbor was a Slave center, slavery being common here for about 150 years. Dutch traders introduced slavery in 1619 to the Jamestown Colony and by 1669 it had become a profitable trade here but by 1819 slavery was abolished in this area. Very little is seen in our slave history but it does appear in books printed before the Civil War.

UPPER WHARF

First used in the late sixteen hundreds by the early settlers for coastal trading, many ships of all types and sizes came and went, it being one of the only deep harbors on the Connecticut coast.

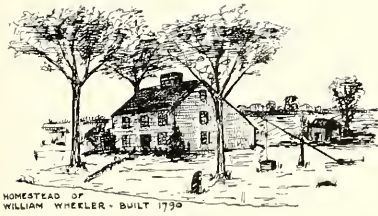
As shipping increased, Captain Schabad Wheeler who owned the ship yard above, built a large and more modern wharf with shipstores and warehouses. In 1801 Peter Perry of Mill Plain became sole owner, whose family operated it for three decades. The wharf passed through many hands and was in use as late as 1915.

Henry Wilson Fancher born 1809 and his son Captain Sherman Fancher and grandson Captain Charles Henry Fancher who died in 1940 all spent their lives around this dock which was known for many years as Fancher's Dock. There were other enterprises which had their dependence upon the sea, one of them being the lobster and fish house of Thompson and Fancher conducted on Fancher's Dock. Cod and lobster were brought in by smacks and were sold at wholesale and retail. Charles H. Fancher of Haviland court, was one of Black Rock's best known residents, afterward took over, and he also conducted an ice business for many years.

MIDDLE WHARF

The stone ruins can be seen on the foot of Beacon Street — was built in 1766, by David Wheeler, 3rd, who also opened up Beacon Street for development.

The wharf changed hands many times — in 1811 it became the property of David Penfield. After his death in 1845 this wharf fell into disuse since the new owner, Captain Benjamin Penfield, was master of packet boats from Bridgeport Harbor.



CAPTAIN WILSON'S WHARF

Built 1850 by Captain Daniel Wilson at the foot of Seaview Terrace the remains can still be seen. At present it is an empty lot where a few power boats are stored in the winter. The wharf, under Captain Howes, imported coal and continued in the coal business till about 1910 under Woodruff Burr.

SQUIRES WHARF

Built 1760 by Samuel Squire. In the Black Rock Bank is the original painting showing this wharf, also in an air-view, can be seen the remains of this wharf. The wharf remained in the family through the middle 1800 passing to Captain John Squire and son John, Jr. It was located on the once famous Money Beach, now Black Rock Yacht Club—once a part of the George Hotel.

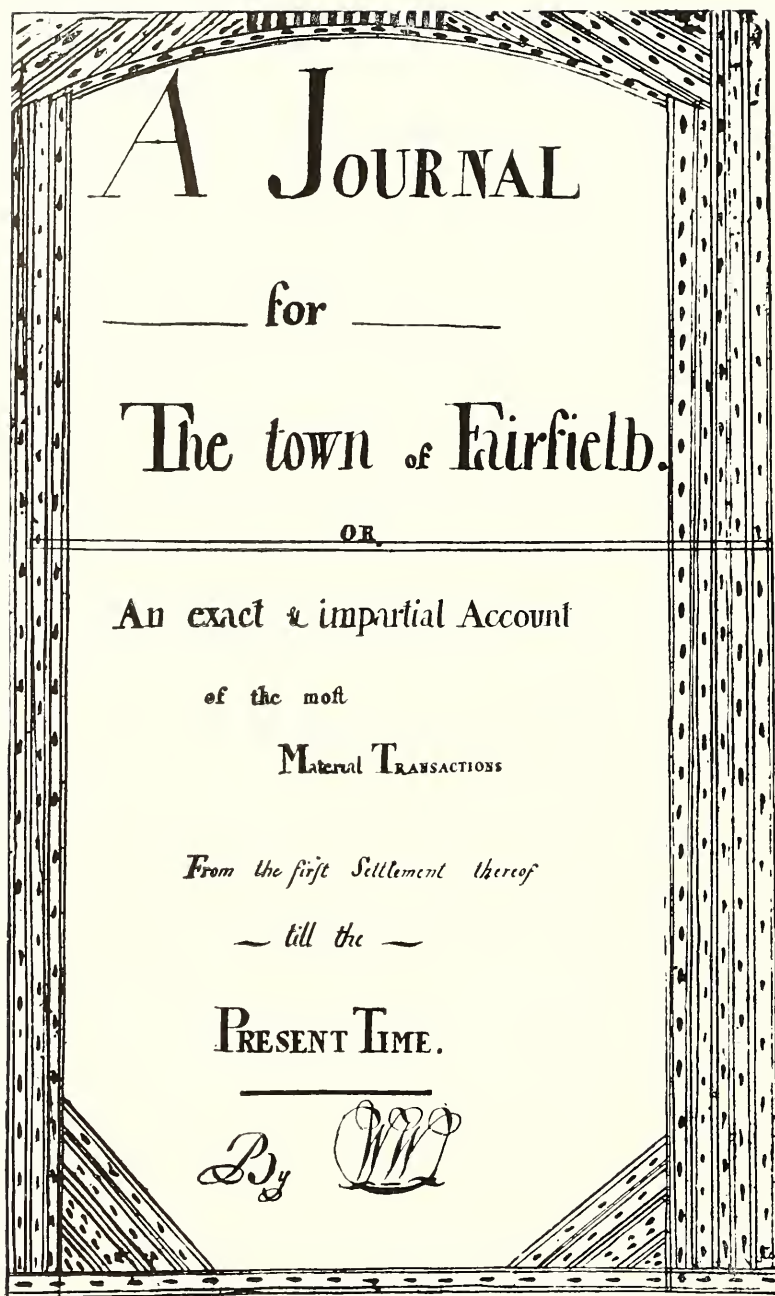
SHIPYARDS

The stores of Black Rock were noted for their chandlery. Even after Bridgeport wharves absorbed most of the sea-trade of the vicinity, ships from that harbor were sent to Black Rock to be fitted out for long voyages or repair.

The shipyards of Black Rock are first noted officially about 1740, and the first single shipbuilder of consequence was Captain Ichabod Wheeler, whose yard lay on the lot north of the wharves, bordered by "shipharbor creek."

The Journal continually refers to this or that worthy who stayed in Black Rock "to build a ship" or "to launch a Vessel", and Longfellow's picture of a shipyard might have been sketched by William Wheeler's pen —

" . . . timbers fashioned strong and true,
 Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee . . .
 And around the bows and along the side
 The heavy hammers and mallets plied . . .
 And around it columns of smoke, upwreathing,
 Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething
 Caldron that glowed
 And overflowed
 With the black tar, heated for the sheathing" —



Facsimile of original title page drawn by William Wheeler, 1780, for his Journal of which all the early accounts of Black Rock History were found. Based on this Journal Mrs. Cornelius Penfield Lathrop published a book called "Black Rock Seaport of Old Fairfield" 1644-1870.

The year 1804 dates a significant entry from Wheeler Journal:

"December 25th — About this time news came that the June (cost 2,000 dolls.) belonging to Riley and Joseph Squire of this port with 7 ton of Iron on board, was entirely lost on the devil's back coming from Salem — And that the Bonaparte, about the same burthen, was lost altogether with a cargo of coals near Egg Harbor. And also that the Rising Sun had to throw overboard 34 or 40 barrels of oil to lighten her in a storm to pass Chatham Bar — These three vessels belonged to poor Black Rock."

In addition to the building of ships, the repairing and scraping (or graving) of vessels was an important occupation. There are several references to the "graving banks" south of the wharves and shipyards, where the boats were laid up to be de-barnacled.

Captain Ichabod Wheeler's chief successor was the firm of Daniel Wilson & Co. Later — in 1856 — Captain William Hall came from "down east" and purchased from (four owners, Captain Brittin, Verdone Ellsworth, Elizabeth K. Wilson, and Sturges & Clearman) the former shipyard, and four waterlots. Upon the lower waterlot he managed a "ship-railway." He died in 1860, and was succeeded by the firm of Hillard & Rew. later Rew & Walker.

Three sets of marine railways existed at what is now the foot of Brewster Street in the days before the Civil War and in the summer season these were constantly in use for ships discharging their cargo or seeking repairs.

One of the large vessels launched at Black Rock was the Blackhawk. Prophetically she "stuck on the ways," and was lost on her first voyage.

The schooner "Equal Rights" was a leader in the shipping trade of her day. She was named because three persons contributed equally in the cost of its construction.

The schooner "Sarah Jane" was built to replace the Blackhawk and retrieved the fortune lost. The shipyard gave way to a turpentine factory in 1870 which burned. Again the place now has a shiprailway for hauling pleasure craft and storage.

When the waters of Long Island Sound were navigable, as a rule, an incoming vessel would be waiting in the harbor, ready to unload when its predecessor had discharged its cargo. A few of the ships were annually stranded here when the winter threw a sudden band of ice about the harbor while many made a practice of mooring for the winter in the icebound waters off Black Rock harbor.



1768—The Isaac Jarvis-David Penfield homestead (10)

(Photographed 1869)

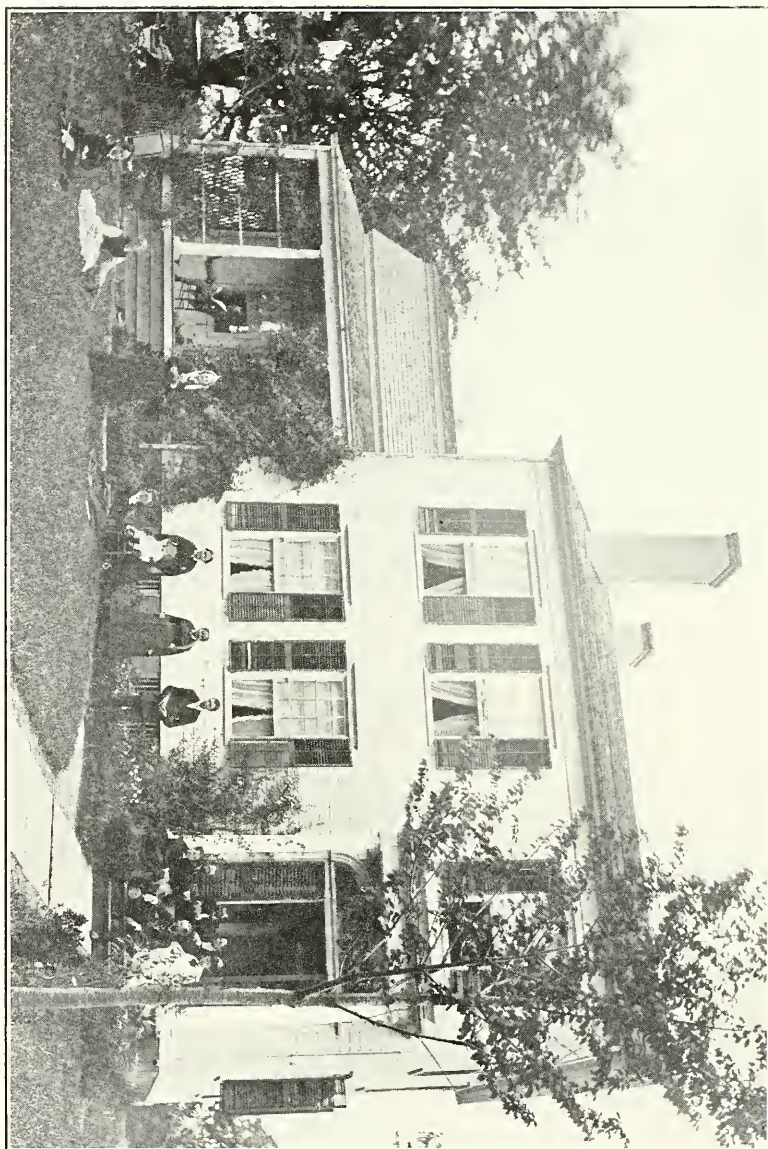
THE ISAAC JARVIS-DAVID PENFIELD HOMESTEAD—Corner of Beacon and Seabright. The property on which the homestead was built has an earlier history being the site of a house built in 1768 by Thomas Beebe on a lot purchased from David Wheeler, 3rd. This house was transferred in 1770 to George Morehouse, in 1775 to Ebenezer Burr, in 1780 to Isaac Jarvis, in 1784 to John Squire, Jr., in 1789 to David Squire, who moved with his family to Stamford, N. Y., and in 1794 to Captain Barlow Sturges, who sold the lot to his brother Gershom, and moved the house down the road to the lot above the Middle Wharf, which was managed by the three Sturges brothers. Early in the new century, David Penfield came to Black Rock from Fairfield, bought the house in 1793, and subsequently the wharf-shares from Barlow, Benjamin and Gershom Sturges. After the death of David Penfield in 1845, the house was occupied by his son, Captain Ephriam Lewis Penfield, and the succeeding generation (several of whom appear in the photograph, taken about 1867). The house was destroyed by fire about 1870.



1789—The Joseph Bartram homestead (15)

(Photographed 1870)

BARTRAM HOMESTEAD—Brewster Street (Bywater St.) John Wheeler (1765-1846), brother of William, and younger son of Captain Ichabod, received from his father in 1790 the lot on which his father and he had built during the preceding year a house overlooking the harbor. In 1803 Terence Riley bought from John Wheeler the house, with a wharf and store, but during the next two years, after purchasing another wharf, business difficulties overtook the new proprietor, and after Riley's sudden death in New York in 1805, the house property was immediately attached by Nicholas Fish of New York, one of the creditors, who sold it to William Hoyt. Rufus Hoyt became owner in 1808. From the Hoyt family the property passed through several owners to Captain Thomas Bartram who in 1829 deeded it to his son, Captain Joseph Bartram, and for more than a century the house has been occupied by his family. This house was torn down about 1932.



1812—The Perry homestead (21)
(Photographed 1870)



The George Hotel, "on the sound," Black Rock Beach, Connecticut, was opened 1874 — it was an elegant and magnificent hotel, known all over the world for its fine food and charm. It was built and managed by George A. Wells, who was an associate of P. T. Barnum.

"Located on Grover Hill, a bold promontory jutting into Long Island Sound forming the western boundary of entrance to Black Rock Harbor. Fronting the beach to the east, south and west, is a perpendicular bluff of from 10 to 30 feet high; above, the land rises gently in all directions to the summit of the hill, which is at an elevation of 100 feet above high water.

It was an imposing structure, located within 100 feet of the Sound. Its commanding view was unsurpassed by any on the Connecticut coast. Toward the south the horizon is bounded by the white hills of Long Island while on either hand the Sound extends as far as the eye can see. In the west are the beautiful villages of Fairfield and Southport; turning to the north, close at hand, was the quaint little town of Black Rock. Toward the east the fast-growing and enterprising City of Bridgeport can be plainly seen, with its tall spires outlined against the distant hills.

The air is bracing and invigorating and in the warmest days of mid-summer a cool sea breeze is seldom wanting. The absence of all malarial diseases and the fact that mosquitoes, those pests of nearly every location near salt water, are seldom seen, greatly enhances the desirability of this really beautiful spot.

SEASON OF 1891

New York & New Haven R.R. Time Table.

Leave by New York & New Haven R.R.

Forty Trains Daily. Six Sunday Trains.

COMMUTATION.—1

Average for Summer, \$15.00 per month.

Leaves New York, Grand Central Depot, 42d Street, for Bridgeport.

Leaves New York.	Arrives at Bridgeport.	Leaves Bridgeport.	Arrives at New York.
Exp's 8:00 A. M.	Exp's 9:51 A. M.	Exp's 4:30 A. M.	Exp's 6:20 A. M.
9:00	10:30	5:11	7:00
9:15	10:45	6:52	8:45
11:00	12:40 P. M.	7:08	9:10
12:30 P. M.	2:07	8:00	9:36
1:00	3:00	8:37	10:20
2:00	3:27	10:06	11:40
3:00	4:30	12:27 P. M.	2:15 P. M.
3:40	5:15	1:57	3:30
4:00	5:41	3:11	4:58
4:45	6:30	4:07	5:50
5:35	7:24	4:29	6:05
9:35	11:42	5:30	7:00
10:30	12:17	6:17	7:50
11:00	12:51	7:31	9:00
		9:06	10:30

ACCOMMODATION TRAINS leave New York 5:00, 7:00, 9:17, 11:27 A. M.

3:02, 4:47, 6:13, 6:45, 7:40 P. M.

SUNDAY TRAINS leave New York 6:00, 7:30 A. M.

3:00, 4:30, 5:00, 10:30, 11:00 P. M.

ACCOMMODATION TRAINS leave Bridgeport 5:41, 6:30, 9:07, 11:15 A. M.

2:15, 4:42, 6:07, 7:50, 9:33 P. M.

SUNDAY TRAINS leave Bridgeport 4:30, 5:11, 8:40 A. M.

5:40, 7:31, 7:58, 9:06 P. M.

STEAMBOATS,

TWO LINES DAILY.

STEAMER "WATERBURY."

Leaves New York, Pier 35 East River, foot of Catharine St., 11:00 A. M.

" Bridgeport (Saturday night excepted), 11:00 P. M.

FARE, 65c. EXCURSION TICKET, \$1.00. STATE ROOMS, \$1.00.

Special Rates for Horses and Carriages.

STEAMER "ROSEDALE."

Leaves New York, Pier 24 East River, foot Peck Slip, 3:00 P. M.

" " Foot 31st Street, East River, 3:15 P. M.

" Bridgeport, 7:15 A. M.

FARE, 65c. EXCURSION TICKET, 75c.

NOTICE.—Will leave New York on Saturdays at 2:30 P. M.



Cover of souvenir booklet given out by Hotel
in 1891



GEORGE A. WELLS

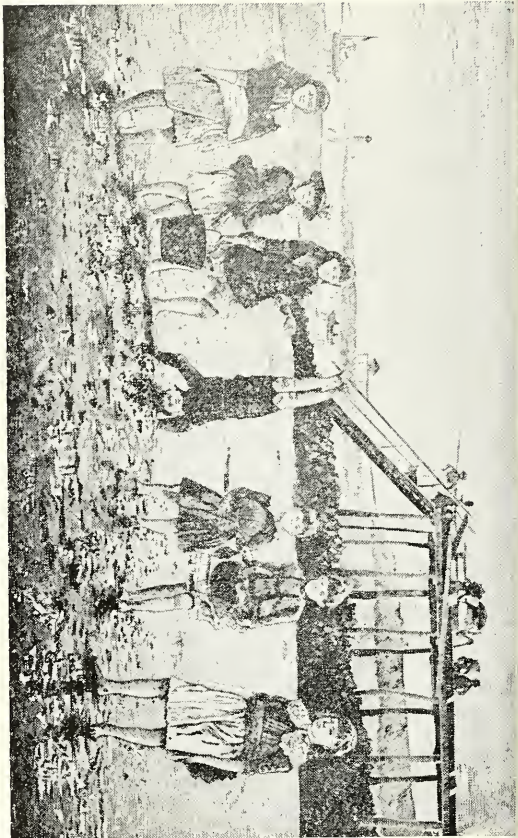
The drawing room and special parlors are spacious; the sleeping apartments are large, well furnished, and contain large presses or wardrobes. Transoms are placed over every door, thus affording free circulation of air and perfect ventilation. Every room in the Hotel is lighted with gas, and communicates with the office by electric bells.

The elegant and commodious dining room, as also the children's and nurses' dining room, are on the main floor, overlooking the Sound, and are large and cool.

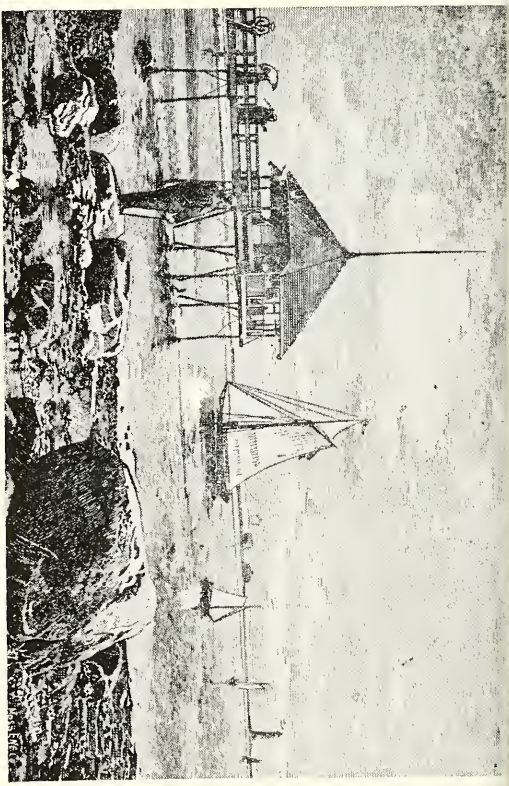
The "cuisine" is under the supervision of an experienced "chef," and the table is provided with the delicacies of the season, and the best the market affords; milk, butter, eggs and vegetables coming direct from the hotel farms.

Abundance of fruit grows on the premises, while fish, oysters, clams and lobsters are procured daily from adjacent waters.

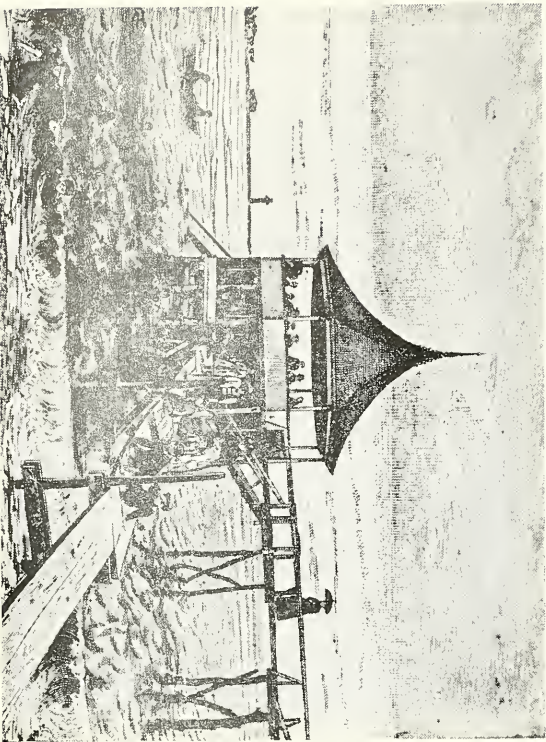
The House is connected by telephone and telegraph. Direct communication is made with Wall Street by private wire and stock quotations are received and posted. Three mails, each way, daily.



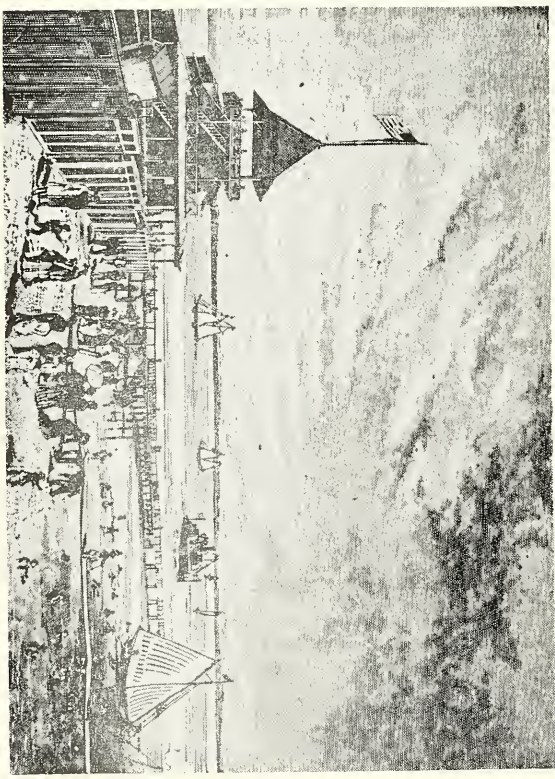
Fun on the sand at Black Rock Beach



Black Rock Light and Harbor, from the George Hotel



PAGODAS—Deep Water Bathing at the George Hotel



High Tide at George Hotel

In addition to the regular Wednesday and Saturday hops, the daily concerts which have met with such general approval, will be continued. The piazzas overlooking the harbor and Sound are broad and afford a grand promenade of over 500 feet. Arrangements have been made to illuminate the extensive grounds, which are elegantly laid out for lawn tennis, croquet, archery and other out-door amusements while pretty Chinese pagodas and large shady trees afford a quiet retreat for those seeking repose.

A massive sea wall surrounds the entire property extending in length over a quarter of a mile crowned by a concrete walk and esplanade. While strolling along this pleasant promenade, across on Fayerweather Island Black Rock Light is seen, marking the entrance to the harbor. Looking Soundward, the pleasure yachts, steamers and sailing vessels present a panoramic view of marine life unsurpassed by any pleasure resort on this Continent.

The adaption of most careful and perfect improvements in the method of drainage has been such as to meet with the highest commendations from the best well known sanitary experts. The system is such that not a sewer pipe passes under the Hotel, but is conducted at once to the outside, and then by iron pipes into the channel, a distance of 2,000 feet, where the swift-flowing tide conveys the waste at once away into the Sound. To this, in connection with the well known healthfulness of the location, we attribute the remarkable fact that during a period of sixteen years, although we have entertained over 35,000 guests including children there has never been a case of protracted or fatal illness at the Hotel."

The "George Hotel at Black Rock" calls up pleasant memories to many folks residing in New England, the Middle Atlantic States and even farther away. From the time the hotel was built by George A. Wells in 1876 until its closing, about 1900, it was a popular summer resort, the hotel and its several cottages, being crowded throughout the season. The Saturday night "hops" were attend by be vies of Bridgeport's beaux and belles. Folks around here still remember the long bus that nightly, during the summer season, went from the hotel to the old Rosedale landing, returning via Fairfield Avenue, packed to the steps with guests from New York, who were visiting for the week-end or arriving for the season. Several wagons trailed behind piled with trunks.

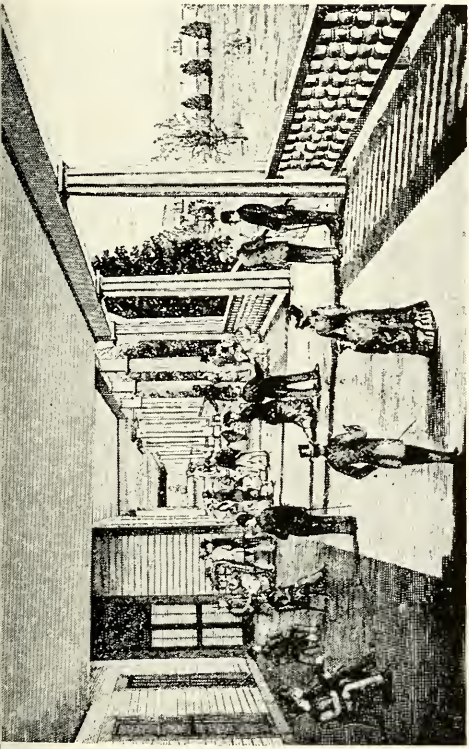
It was about 1902 when the hotel was torn down, but the south wing, being of a later date, was thought worth saving. It was removed on scows by Treat and Chamberlain, contractors who built the County Court House, taken up the creek and eventually set up on Bassick avenue in Bridgeport. Here it

was converted into stores on the ground floor and tenements above, and may be seen on Bassick avenue today, between State and Fairfield avenue, the sole material reminder of the good old days when the George Hotel was a popular summer hostelry. Warren Briggs, architect, had the contract to raze this popular house after the death of Mr. Wells. When doors were closed on the last season and "Finis" was written at the end of the register, the hotel and cottages were purchased by a syndicate of Black Rock residents, Messrs. Watson, Thorne and Pearsall, whose palatial residences were south of the hotel.

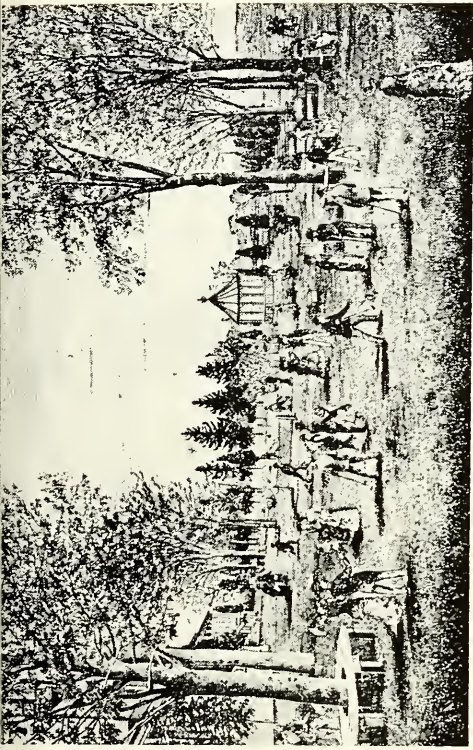


HIS PRIVATE SEA WALL

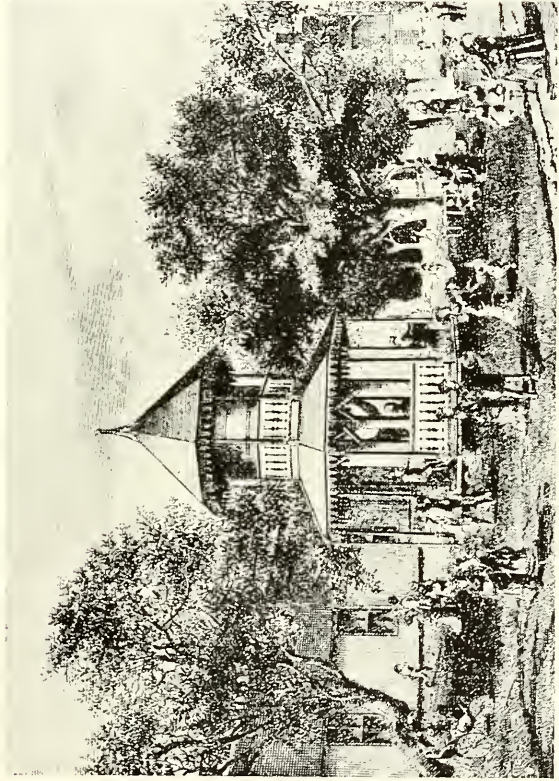
Down on the shore, at the entrance to the "rock" proper, stood a building known as the Shore House, which had belonged to the Penfield family of Black Rock. George A. Wells purchased this and afterwards bought Grover's Hill, the famous fortified promontory of Revolutionary days, and in 1876 built the hotel, later adding cottages with accommodations for 200 guests in the height of the season. The outlook was charming, on clear nights Execution light, near New York could be plainly seen, and on clear days houses on Long Island were easily visible. Old Mrs. Moore, who used to keep the lighthouse on Fayerweather Island, loved to relate about days when the Black Rock cliff extended out almost to Penfield Reef, and cows were kept out there to graze, where now is deep water. Storms often dashed madly against the cliff but Mr. Wells had a large stone wall erected which protected his property from the biggest ones. One of the tempests however, inflicted severe damage and P. T. Barnum, a great friend of Mr. Wells, came over the next day to see the



The Piazza at the George Hotel



Lawn Tennis and Croquet Grounds at the George Hotel



Shady side Pleasure Grounds at the George Hotel



damage and sympathize with his friend. P. T. Barnum said "George, I am awfully sorry this happened." To which Mr. Wells quickly replied, "Well, P. T., just as much as you are sorry, give me a check. If you are \$2,000 sorry, all right."

Twenty yachts came ashore in this storm. Manville, of "Manville Paint" fame, had his fine schooner yacht anchored in the harbor, it had cost him \$50,000. After the storm, the remains were sold for a few hundred dollars. The entire dock had been ripped away, and the waves had picked up the yacht tossing it down on the standing piles of the wrecked dock.

The Atlantic Yacht squadron, the New York and the Larchmont Yacht clubs always made Black Rock a week-end port on their cruises. This annually meant a big Saturday night hop, attended by many Bridgeporters. Commodore Gould always held service Sunday morning on his yacht, Atlanta. An organ was on deck and seats furnished for 150 guests.

A FAMOUS TALLYHO

Many folks still remember seeing the tallyho which Mr. Wells purchased from Jim Fiske, New York's once famous financier. It was something of an innovation, but Mr. Wells rather doted on innovations. The first bathing house on wheels, such as was used at Brighton, England, was imported by Mr. Wells and was used on the Black Rock beach. The first oysters taken from this country to England were exported by Mr. Wells when he was associated with P. T. Barnum, in 1865, the year they took Tom Thumb to Europe.

Also, the first boat ever propelled by a kite operated by Mr. Wells' son-in-law, W. W. Harral, about 1880, was from the George Hotel to Port Jefferson. The event created such a stir that the New York Daily Graphic devoted two pages to the story of this event. The kite was 9 by 12 feet and was attached to the bow of the boat, taking two men to hold the kite. A sail boat following the yacht was left far behind. After the wind changed and on the way back, making great speed, they passed a schooner. The captain of the schooner seeing no person operating the yacht, exclaimed: "My God! It must be the Flying Dutchman."

The old Penfield cottage, after the owners of which Penfield Light was named, was purchased by Mr. Wells, put on scows, and moved from its site, to the Grover Hill section and was added to the cottage colony of George Hotel. This colony included eight cottages, which were built at a cost ranging from \$8,000 to \$15,000, a very good price for building in those days.

Johnathan Thorne and his neighbor, Mr. Pearsall, purchased some of the Grover Hill property from Mr. Wells and erected their handsome residences, still standing, south of the residence of the late General T. L. Walton. The Thorne and Pearsall mansions were built at a cost approximating a quarter of a million each, materially adding to the residential section of the point. Among those who rented cottages for many seasons were William Pond, music publisher; Hostesser of the "Bitters" fame; Frederick Stern and family of New York, the dry goods merchant; and the Cheneys of South



Sea View Cottage, private residence of George A. Wells

Manchester, silk manufacturers. These were but a few of the families who returned year after year, to this popular hotel, which was under the management of Mr. Wells and his nephews, the Harrals, notably George S. Harral, who was manager when the hotel was closed.

GEORGE WAS NO SAINT

Some one referred to this hotel as the "St. George," not long ago, and was corrected promptly with; "You mean the George Hotel, not the St. George. It was named for George Wells, and I'd say he was no saint."

But the fact is, Mr. Wells named the hotel after the George Hotel at Stratford-on-Avon, where he often stopped when in England, because it was so well conducted. And guests of the George Hotel at Black Rock would agree that the hotel lived up to the character of its English namesake.



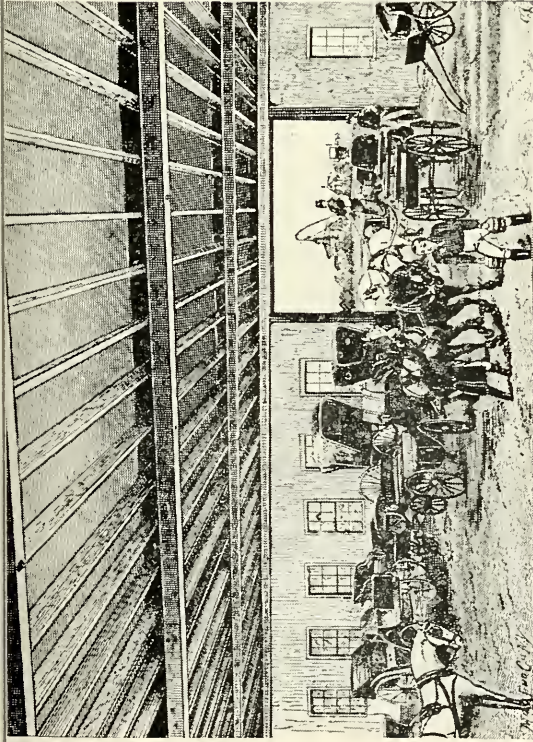
Sound Beach Cottage

The shore house, Mr. Well's first purchase, was used in connection with the hotel principally as a bar. There those delectable concoctions of American extraction, now but a memory to the general public at large, were mixed and dispensed. Excellent shore dinners also were served there. A long wharf led out over the water and another walk led to a boat and summer house combined, which was directly in front of the hotel. When the Watson, Thorne and Pearsall syndicate was formed after Mr. Well's death for the purchase of the hotel, it was eventually decided to tear down the hotel proper, with the exception of the south wing. The cottages and shore house were not removed and the old shore house still nestles snugly to the water line much the same as it did in the old days. But all these have passed, like the hotel, and the shore house has subsided into private life and subdued old age.

THE LIVERY

The barns and stables were the finest of their day, accommodating over 100 horses and ample carriage room. The covered court yard gave extensive room and facilities for harnessing and unharnessing the horses under cover. Horses or carriages could be hired at any time, drives to Greenfield Hill and Samp Mortar Rock were popular afternoon drives.

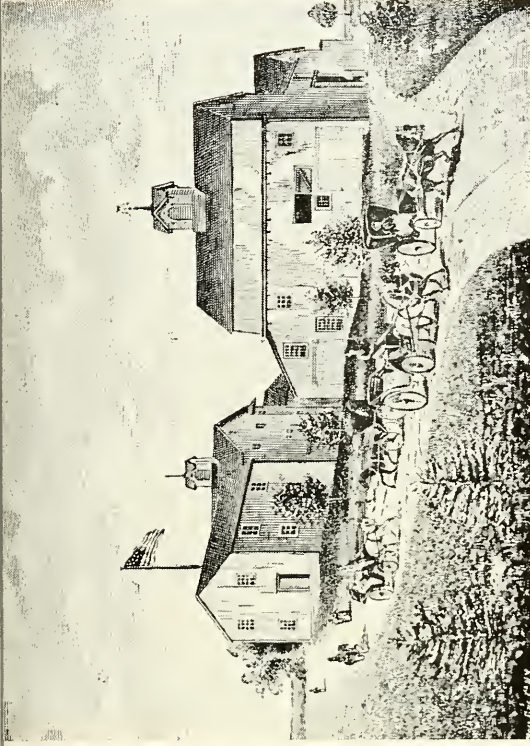
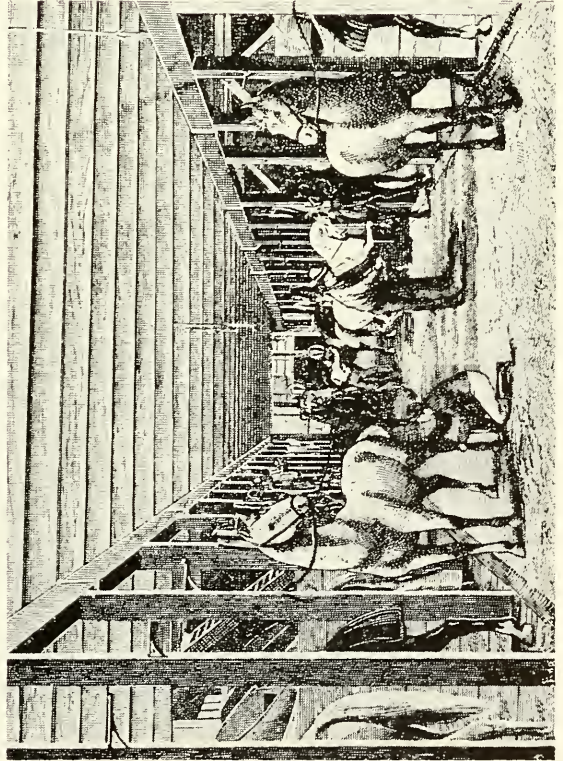
The hotel stage met all trains and was the only means of transportation in those days.



(Top left) The Covered Court Yard of the
George Hotel Stables

(Top right) The Stables of the George Hotel

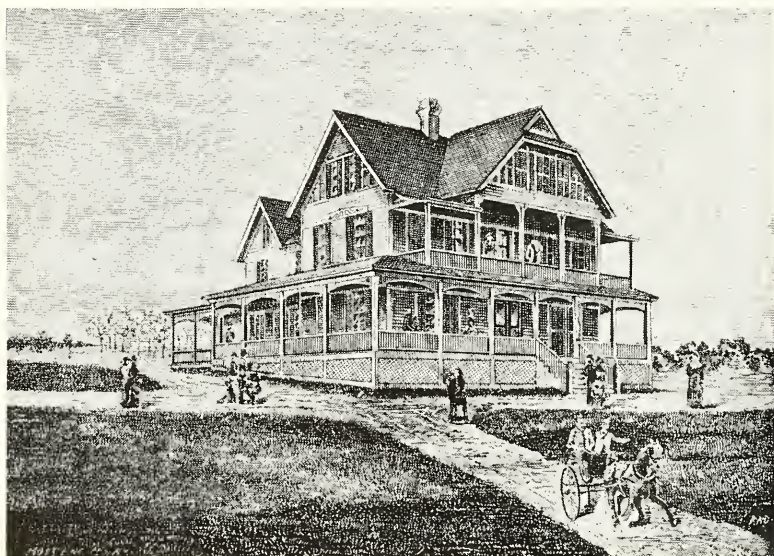
(Lower left) Sectional view of the George
Hotel Stables



Below is the description George Well wrote about his cottages. They are now all gone, some torn down, others moved and remodeled. (See house section)

COTTAGES

The Hawthorn, Sound View, Beach House, Hill Side and Cedar Lawn, are owned by the proprietor, and are all contained on about fifty acres belong-



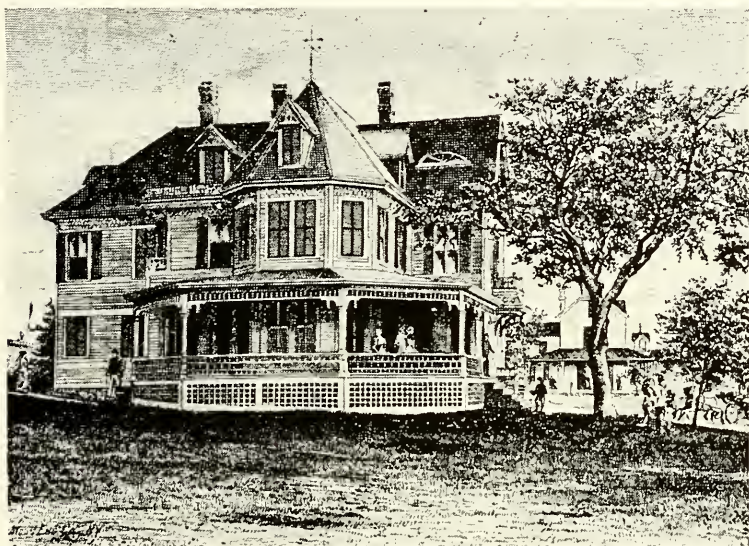
Hawthorn Cottage



Cedar Lawn Cottage

ing to the property; they adjoin the Hotel, are situated on high ground overlooking the Sound, have broad piazzas. From the balconies, as also from the Hotel, a magnificent view of the Sound can be obtained. All these beautiful cottages have been built within the last five years.

They are elegantly furnished and provided with every modern convenience for housekeeping; they are lighted with gas, supplied with running water, hot-air furnaces, ranges, etc., and communicate with the George Hotel office by electric bells.



Hill Side Cottage



Rose Cottage

They contain from fifteen to twenty rooms, and no expense has been spared in making them the equal of city houses.

With a view of enabling families who desire to keep house, these cottages can be engaged for the season, and until late in the fall, or they will be rented by the season to parties desiring to board at the Hotel, and yet retain the privacy of home without the cares of housekeeping.

1891 — They had 40 trains a day, fastest one — 1 hour 27 minutes.

1951 — We have 60 trains a day — fastest one — 1 hour 5 minutes.

Parties desiring deeper water, bath houses and spring boards have been placed on the end of Pagoda Pier.

Sail and row boats can be obtained at all times, and experienced attendants will accompany fishing and sailing parties when desired.

The extensive water frontage and piers afford ample opportunity for indulgence in aquatic sports. For the accommodation of ladies and children, bathing houses have been erected on the sandy beach, where they may bathe at any stage of the tide with perfect safety.

BLACK ROCK PIER



A favorite promenade of the guests is a private pier of the "George," and is situated within a stone's throw of the house; is over 500 feet long, and extends to the channel, offering a convenient landing at all times to yachtmen, who pronounce this harbor one of the finest and safest between New York and New London. It has, in consequence, become a favorite rendezvous of the various yacht clubs, several of whose craft are usually at anchor immediately in front of the Hotel.

DEATH OF GEORGE A. WELLS

He Was Formerly Associated With P. T. Barnum as a Showman

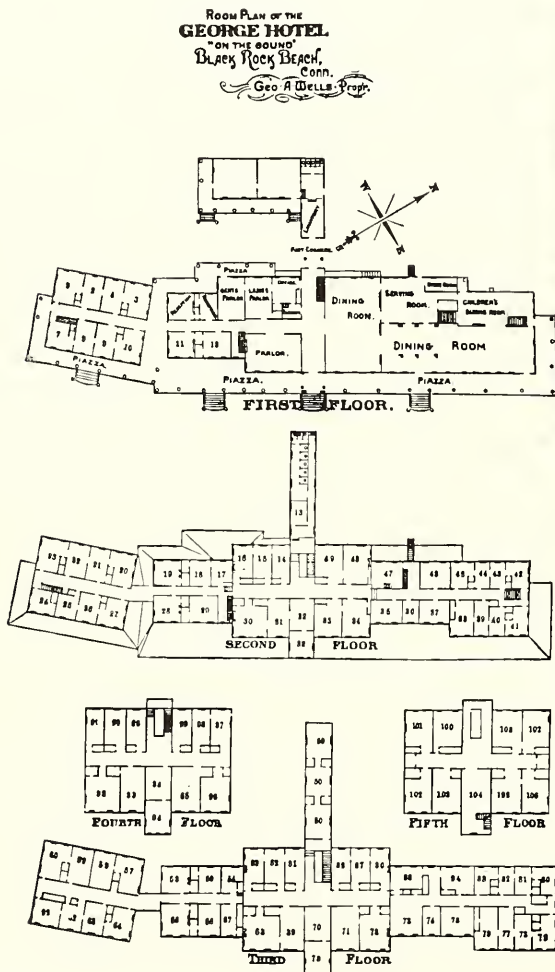
An eventful life full of many experiences and exceeding by five years the three-score and ten limit was closed by the death of George A. Wells, which occurred yesterday afternoon at his home in Black Rock. For several months past Mr. Wells had been in poor health, and for some little time had been confined to his home. Death was not totally unexpected, for several times during the past few weeks he had been very low. He leaves two daughters, Mrs. W. W. Harral and Mrs. W. L. Miller, both of whom reside in this city. Funeral services over his remains will be held tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from his former residence in Black Rock.

Mr. Wells was a native of Stratford, but early in life came to this city. He engaged in various pursuits, but some time prior to 1840 opened a large boarding and oyster house on Water street, near Bank. This was a successful venture, but in the great fire of 1845 the establishment was destroyed. In 1850 he began his life in the amusement world, in which he made so great a success. At that time P. T. Barnum had just brought Jenny Lind before the public and selected Mr. Wells to direct her tours. This work he did with such satisfaction that at the termination of the contract in 1852 Barnum engaged him for a tour of America and Australia as manager of Catherine Hayes, another star.

His next important position was that of manager of the Tom Thumb combination including the general, his wife and Commodore Nutt. In 1862 General Thumb in company with the then Miss Lavinia Warren, was being exhibited by the late Mr. Barnum. Mr. Wells visited the parents of Miss Warren at Middleborough, Mass., and secured their consent to the marriage, which occurred soon after in this city. He then took the combination and visited every city of importance in this country and Europe, the venture making him a wealthy man.

He then returned to this city and retiring from show business began his dealings in real estate. Much of this property was disposed of advantageously through a lottery which he established and which acquired a national reputation. Early in the '70's he moved to Black Rock and soon after began the erection of the George hotel, which in 1874 was opened for the first time. Under his able management it soon became possessed of the reputation for excellence, which it still possesses. About two years ago he purchased the Hotel St. Marc at Fairfield, but a short time since retired from the management of both houses.

It is now nearly two years since he came prominently before the public in connection with Oscar Moore, the colored boy, whose wonderful powers of memory amazed all who heard him. Mr. Wells had named him the Human Phonograph and intended to make a tour of the country with him, but was prevented by his failing health.



George S. Harrall, last living relative of George Wells, surrounded by the memoirs of his famous ancestor.



(Top picture) Fayerweather Lighthouse in operation 1808-1932.
(Lower left) One of the two blinkers that have replaced the Lighthouse.
(Lower right) Lighthouse Keeper's house on Fayerweather Island.

BLACK ROCK LIGHTHOUSE

Fayerweather's Island was first owned by a Rev. Charles Chauncey and sold by him to Benjamin Fayerweather in 1713. The government bought the island and built a lighthouse in 1808 in accordance with a Congressional Appropriation of \$5,000 which was approved on February 10, 1807.

The first lighthouse keeper, John Maltbie, died after five months on the island.

The second lighthouse keeper, Captain Isaac Judson, also died on the island. He kept the light till his death in October 9, 1814. Stephen T. Moore, was appointed lighthouse keeper in 1817 and remained until 1874. Catherine Moore was appointed lighthouse keeper after the death of her father, Stephen Moore, and retained her post until 1878. She was then 84 years old having tended the light since she was 12 years old. This family tended the light for over three-quarters of a century. Joseph Eddy was Miss Moore's assistant for the last few years.

On September 22, 1821, a southeast gale washed over the island and destroyed the lighthouse and the last of the great trees that at one time covered the island. Every vessel in the harbor was washed ashore, one sloop was demasted, one vessel with six men aboard went down, all hands lost.

On October 28, 1835, the new lighthouse (still standing) was built by Daniel Wilson and Downs at a cost of \$8,000. Leonard Clark was appointed Acting Keeper of the lighthouse on December 14, 1878, following Miss Moore. Clark became Keeper on February 11, 1880 and was followed by Mary Elizabeth Clark, who was made Acting Keeper on March 14, 1906 and was relieved on April 5, 1906. Jonathan D. Davis became Assistant Keeper on March 22, 1906, was appointed Keeper on May 14, 1906 and remained until 1932, when the lighthouse was replaced by automatic blinkers.

Black Rock Light is among the oldest along Long Island Sound. Its oil light, a fixed white light of 350 candle power, was visible for 44 miles. It was replaced in 1932 by two automatic blinkers that stand, one 1800 feet farther seaward from the old light on a rocky shoal with a large stone foundation and by a 40 foot steel tower costing \$7,000 and built by the Mouker Contracting Company of New York. This tower was blown down in the storm of 1950. The second blinker was a 25 foot tower farther in toward the harbor and cost \$5,000 which still stands.



KATE MOORE

In these days so much is said and written of the new woman, of what she is doing and will do, that one is apt to lose sight of the fact that the "old" woman did just exactly as much, only there were not quite so many of them.

No woman more fitly illustrates the truth of this iconoclastic remark than the lighthouse keeper, Kate Moore, now one of the "exempts." She has recently passed her ninety-fourth birthday, and until ten years ago, when she trimmed her lamps and climbed the spiral stairway of the tall tower for the last time, the light at the entrance to Black Rock Harbor, near Bridgeport, Conn., was for many years kept burning by her hands.

Although now so near the century mark, Miss Moore is still hale and hearty. Her hazel eyes are as bright and her intellect as quick as if she were thirty, but Father Time has rather outdone himself in writing his stenographic characters upon her face, having been aided in this doubtless by Brother Neptune, for, crossing and recrossing her face are the lines of ten thousand curious wrinkles. Time has, however, touched her brown hair with the utmost delicacy; it covers her head well and but few silver threads are visible. She still holds herself erect, although in her daily walk along the shore she generally carries a quaint, knotted staff.

Her manner of speaking is abrupt, as though she were accustomed to giving orders and to having them obeyed. Although deprived of educational advantages in the isolated home, where she lived so many years, she became a reader of books and was a writer of her experiences in a most interesting way.

She is spending her last days quietly in an old-fashioned cottage commanding a magnificent view of the Sound and of Fayerweather Island, on which the lighthouse stands. The approach to the cottage is by a flight of six steep steps cut into the elevated front yard. A Sunday World reporter who called there was met by the old lady herself and invited inside.

As she talked she held in her arms a cigar-box containing some tiny shells, which she had just gathered for use in her fancy work. When asked how it

KATE MOORE—Interviewed by New York World reporter.

happened that she selected as her vocation the keeping of a lighthouse, she smiled and replied: "Well, I didn't exactly select it; I was brought up to it. My father Stephen Tomlinson Moore, was a West Indian merchant, and one time, while he was here, he undertook to assist Commodore Hull in getting in a load of hay. The oxen ran away, father was injured, and the Government gave him the position. Between him and me we kept the lighthouse in our family for seventy-two years. No doubt, that seems a very long time to you; but I can remember further back than that.

"At that time the island was very different from what it is now. It was a fine piece of land of two hundred acres, with plenty of trees, while now it has but eight acres and has no foliage except the ailanthus trees which I set out twenty years ago. I planted one hundred and fifty, and many of them are still living. They're fit for nothing but a sand beach, anyway, you know.

"I've heard my father say that when my grandfather, Robert Moore, first sailed into Black Rock Harbor — or rather Pequonnock Harbor, it was then — the island was quite a forest. He held a commission under King George, and he married Phoebe Tomlinson, of the Housatonic River. I suppose you know that the Tomlinsons came to this country and bought a whole township on the Housatonic?

"As I was saying, the island has been ruined by gales since then. Every fifty years these great gales come, the waves dashing clear over the island, and on January 19, 1820, the last of the old trees was swept away. The lighthouse itself blew over once. I don't remember just what year it was," she said, musingly, "but I know it was on September 22. It was a dreadful thing to have happen, for this was then the only light on the Connecticut side of Long Island — the only light between New Haven and Eaton Neck — and was of course of inestimable value to mariners.

"Sometimes there were more than two hundred sailing vessels in here at night, and some nights there were as many as three or four wrecks, so you may judge how essential it was that they should see our light.

"It was a miserable one to keep going, too; nothing like those in use nowadays. It consisted of eight oil lamps which took four gallons of oil each night, and if they were not replenished at stated intervals all through the night, they went out. During very windy nights it was almost impossible to keep them burning at all, and I had to stay there all night, but on other nights I slept at home, dressed in a suit of boys' clothes, my lighted lantern hanging at my head-board and my face turned so that I could see shining on the wall the light from the tower and know if anything happened to it. Our house was forty rods from

the lighthouse, and to reach it I had to walk across two planks under which on stormy nights were four feet of water, and it was not any too easy to stay on those slippery, wet boards with the wind whirling and the spray blinding me. I don't want to do it now," she said with a shake of her head.

"At what age did you begin the care of the light?"

"I was just twelve years old when I first began to assist my father in trimming the wicks. A few years after that his health began to fail and from then on I was practically the keeper. He died fourteen years ago at the age of one hundred, after having been an invalid for a great many years. The commission was then given to me for eight years — Admiral Case, of the United States Navy secured it for me — but I only remained four years."

"Did you stay during that time entirely alone?"

"Generally; although I had a young boy to assist me at times. But I never had much time to get lonely. I had a lot of poultry and two cows to care for, and each year raised twenty sheep, doing the shearing myself, and the killing when necessary," she said, as though butchering were quite an everyday affair with women. "You see in the winter we couldn't get on land on account of the ice being too thin or the water too rough.

"Then in Summer I had my garden to make and keep, for I raised all my own stuff, and, as we had to depend on rain for all the water we used, quite a bit of time was consumed in looking after that. We tried a number of times to dig for water, but always struck salt."

"Didn't you find the life a hard one?"

"No. I don't think I did. You see, I had done all this for so many years, and I knew no other life, so I was sort of fitted for it. I never had much of a childhood as other children have it. That is, I never knew playmates. Mine were the chickens, ducks and lambs and my two Newfoundland dogs."

"Do you ever feel homesick for your island home?"

"Never. The sea is a treacherous friend. In sailing to Georgia one time I was blown to the West Indies, and I've no love for such things."

"Is it true, Miss Moore, that you have, yourself saved twenty-one lives?"

"It is," she said, modestly, "and I wish it had been double that number. Of course, there were a great many others, washed up on the shore, half dead, whom we revived, and they all stayed with us until they received means with which to leave. They used to eat up all our provision, and Government never paid us a cent for boarding them."

"Were many of the dead washed onto your beach?" A look as though she saw the ghastly faces came into Miss Moore's eyes; she shuddered and made a little gesture with her hands, as she exclaimed:

"Hundreds! We had to keep them too, until Government chose to dispose of them."

Miss Moore owns the property on which she lives, and has besides, it is said, a bank account of \$75,000, all of which she accumulated during her recluse existence, when her expenses were necessarily small. A part of her little fortune was acquired, so the natives say, through interests which she controlled in oyster beds near the island, the planting, gathering and seeding for market, all being conducted under her supervision. She boasts that she has never seen the day she was afraid of a man. When piratically inclined oystermen or clam-diggers attempted to venture on her soil, she was on the lookout and even though the invader came well protected she would man her little boat, and, with an old shotgun that was her constant companion, row out and cause a hasty retreat by the offender. She rarely wasted words on such an occasion.

"I represent the United States Government and you've got to go!" was her terse way of putting it, and she was invariably obeyed.

Another industry by which she added to her dollars was the making of ducks. They were sold not only to visitors to the island as souvenirs, but the demand for them became so great among sportmen that Miss Moore frequently had orders from dealers for two or three barrels of them at a time. When asked how she made them she replied:

"Why, I just took two blocks of wood and carved them out with a knife. It didn't take long to make one, and I liked to do it. I often worked at them in the nights that I had to stay up."

During the interview the subject of genealogy came up. In this it appears, Miss Moore is quite an enthusiast.

"My mother was descended from the Plantagenets," she said proudly, "and Baron Boothe, of England, is also one of my ancestors, as is Gen. David Wooster."

As her visitor arose to leave Miss Moore said:

"And did the 'New York World' send you all the way up here just to see me?"

"It certainly did," he answered, "and had you been further away I should have been sent just the same."

"Well, well," she said slowly, nodding her head with each word, and then added, with apparently much commiseration:

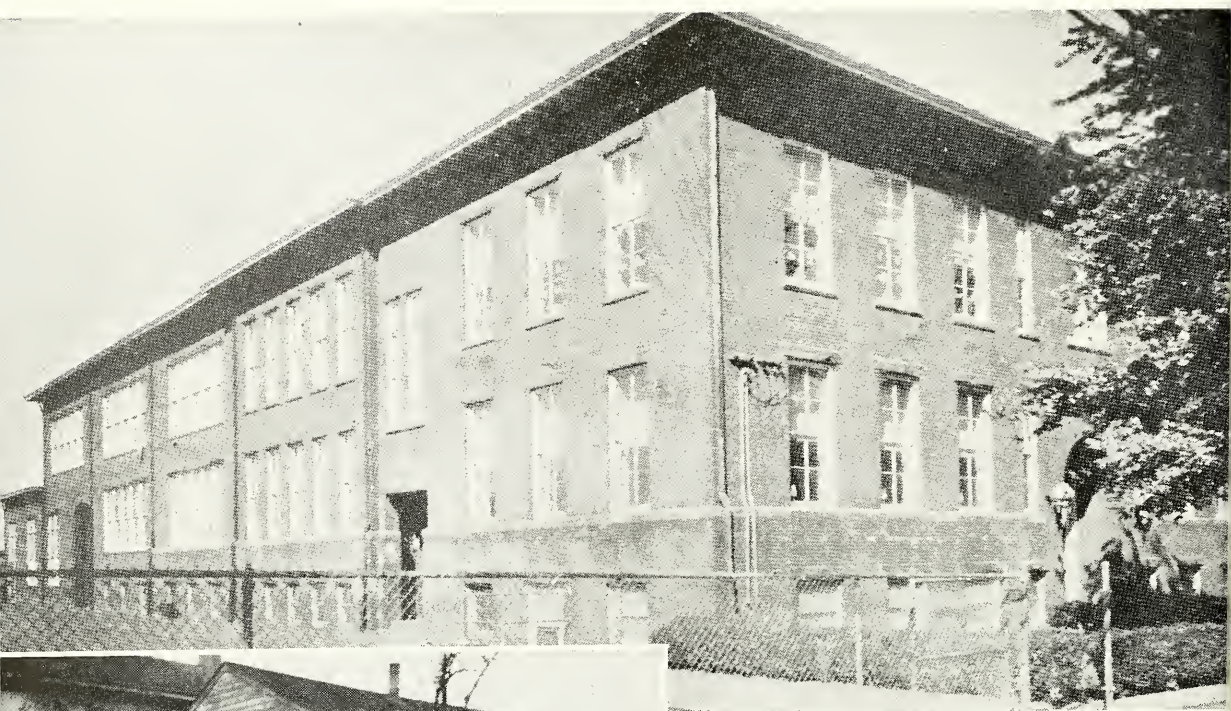
"But it's too bad you didn't know when I was visiting my sister in Brooklyn, and saved yourself this long journey."

With cordial invitations to "come again whenever you can," the reporter said good-by to this very interesting but by no means new woman.



Home of KATE MOORE after she left the Fayerweather Lighthouse. She lived there until her death about the year 1900. After Miss Moore, the property was owned by W. W. Welslo, until it was torn down in 1930. It was located at the foot of Brewster Street, across from Fancher's Dock and the Fayerweather Yacht Club.

— Photo courtesy of Mrs. Verna Priestly



BLACK ROCK SCHOOL

(Top) Present School built in 1905; (left center) First school 1675-1831; (lower left) School built in 1831; Auxiliary Black Rock School built in 1893-1905.



BLACK ROCK SCHOOLS

The first Black Rock public school was a low, one-room building with two doors and a pot-bellied stove near the front door.

The older children sat on benches in front of their desks, which were along the two long sides of the room in front of the windows. The little tots sat on low benches facing the teacher. The building was located on a green at the intersection of Brewster Street and Grovers Avenue. Mr. William Wheeler, was the teacher for many years. (1789-1817).

The school was in continuous use until 1841 when it was sold to Arthur Smith, who moved it off the green on to a lot next to the new school and made it into living quarters. It was finally torn down in 1920 — then being well over 200 years old.

1818 - 1827

The Black Rock Academy was a two-room schoolhouse, 30"x20" which stood on the site of the present public playground. (Brewster and Ellsworth). This was a private school.

FEBRUARY 17, 1831

Black Rock voted 300 dollars for a new schoolhouse and 40 dollars for land. In October 1841, the school was opened. It was a two-story building with a belfry. It was torn down in 1923, after serving for 82 years.

Other old schools in Black Rock were the Dr. Beach Singing School — 1785; Staples Free School — 1793, which lasted only five months in Black Rock. It was donated by Mr. Staples of Weston. An Act of Assembly ordered it moved to Weston where later it was called the Weston Academy. Mr. William Wheeler was the first headmaster at 166 dollars a year.

AUXILIARY BLACK ROCK SCHOOL 1893-1905

This was originally the barn of the Hackley estate. It was all that was left of the Hackley Estate that was burned. The barn was later bought by Joseph Smith and moved to Hackley Street and made into a home. It was located where the present playground is situated on Ellsworth and Brewster Streets.

1829-1839

In 1829 a select school was organized. It first held classes in the upper floor of the carriage shop. Later it had its own building in Smith's Lane (now Calderwood Place). Mrs. Joseph Bartram and Mrs. Benjamin Penfield conducted the school.

The present Black Rock Public School was built in 1905 with an addition in 1911 and the final addition, with the assembly hall and playground, in 1923.

TEACHERS OF BLACK ROCK SCHOOL

Prior to 1865, some of the teachers were Alanson Allen, Mrs. Jones, Miss Browne, and Miss Susan Mills (Allen)

1865	Mr. Hill
1869	Mr. Middleton
1870	Grade 1, Miss Preston
1883	Grade 6, Minnie F. Ford
1885-1890	Miss Carpenter Miss Rose Lathrop
1891	Grade 4, Mary S. Mixson Grade 3, M. Alice Gould
1893	Grade 9, Mary S. Mixson (Prin.) Grade 3, Emily C. Brown
1894	Mary S. Mixson (Prin.) Grade 3, Anne H. Crandall
1895	Grade 9, Carrie P. Hammond (Prin.) Grade 3, Anne H. Crandall
1896	Grade 4-7, Carrie P. Hammond (Prin.) Grade 1-3, Anne H. Crandall
1897	Grade 4-7, J. Hattie Holzer (Prin.) Mrs. Darr Whitney, Rose Harrington (Assistant) Grade 1-3, Anne H. Crandall
1900-1905	Miss Anne Drew Hallock (Mrs. Frank Miller of the Frank Miller Lumber Company)
1900-1918	Miss Fannie G. Sturges (Mrs. Bert Rigers)
1905-1922	Miss Levi
1923-1924	Miss Little (Mrs. Joe Yates)
1924-to date	Miss Ida Holroyd (Prin.)

The school enrollment in 1925 was 902; in 1954 — 430.

*As told by Mrs. Helen Lockwood Mansfield of North Haven, Conn.,
who went to school there.*

It was a low one-room building with two doors to entry, one on either side of the stove. The stove was at the entry end of the room and the teacher's desk at the other, unless it was very cold, then he or she would move it nearer to the stove.

The older children sat on benches in front of their desks, which were along the two long long sides of the room in front of the windows, with their backs to the room.

The plank benches were held up by stout hickory sticks, which spread at their contact with the floor.

The little tots sat on low benches facing the teacher.

Arthur Smith's father bought the old school house, moved it over on his property and made it over into a dwelling (which was used as such until about 1920.)

*The following was taken from a letter written in 1927/8, by
Mrs. Arthur Smith of Black Rock:*

Known as the first school house at Black Rock, it originally stood on the green (in the triangle at the intersection of Grovers Avenue and Black Rock Avenue (now Brewster Street), across from the one you saw in the past, how many years before I don't know. At that time there was a private school in what used to be called Smith's Lane (now Calderwood Place), where the Smith boys came up with me. I went there to school.

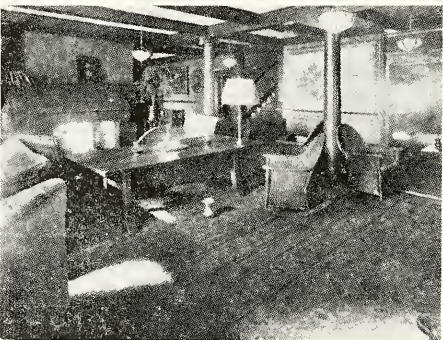
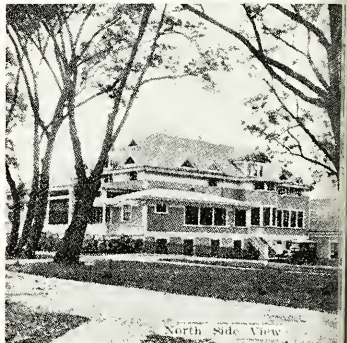
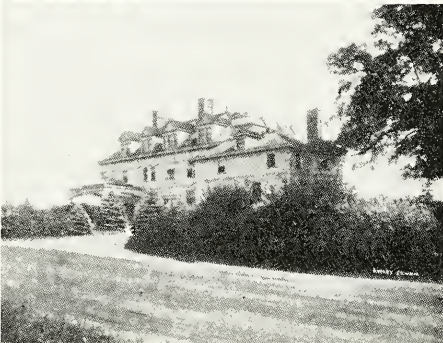
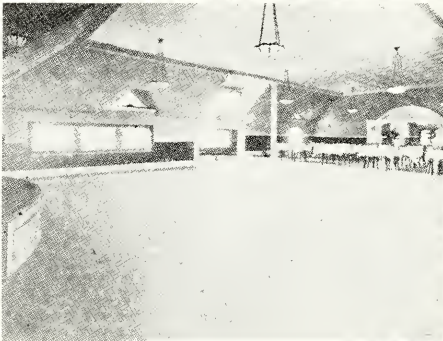
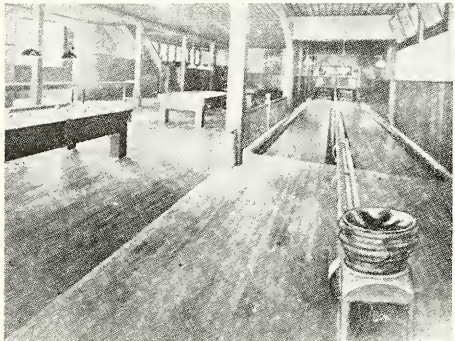
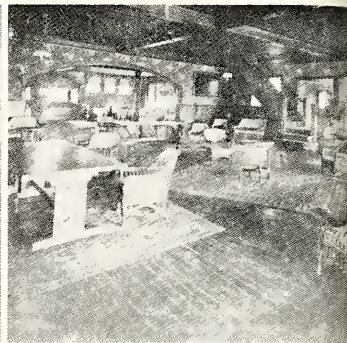
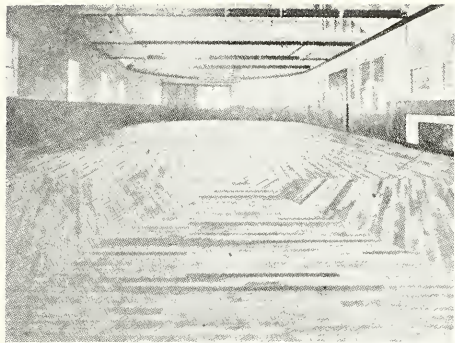
When the new school house was built there was a fight between the Smiths and the Bartrams.

My father bought the old school house and moved it over onto the lot my mother owned and made it over into a house, that is all I can tell you about the school affairs.

From the time of the school on the green there has been no building on the ground.

— File of FAIRFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FAIRFIELD, CONN.

*Copied by Edna H. Forsyth, Curator
from typed copy.*



Views of Gilman's Club House

(Later known as Champ's Shore House)

(Reading from left to right—Top) Originally indoor riding rink, later a roller skating rink. Swimming pool. Lounge Club House.

(Second row): Bowling alley, Ballroom, East view of Club House.

(Third row) South view of Manor House, North view of Manor House, North view of Club House..

(Bottom) East view of Manor House, Lounge in Manor House, Bedroom in Manor House.

GEORGE F. GILMAN — 1859 - 1901

In 1859, George Gilman and George Hartford entered into partnership to sell tea. The partnership flourished very quickly and Gilman ceased active participation and retired to Black Rock. The company grew into the gigantic Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company. Prior to the forming of the A & P Tea Company, Gilman was a wealthy leather merchant and social playboy. Hartford was a poor merchant.

George F. Gilman was born in Waterville, Maine in 1828. He died in 1901 in Black Rock at the age of 73.

Nathaniel Gilman, father of George F. Gilman had been in the leather business and when George was a youth, went to New York City to Gold Street behind the present World Building in New York, and established himself in the same business. When George grew up his father set him up in the tea, coffee, spices and baking powder business on Spring Street at Vesey. A retail house under the name of the Great American Tea Company, continued through 42 years of Gilman's consistent prosperity to be the main headquarters of the later Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company. Tea was sold by wagon routes, and every one who bought a half pound received a premium which, when enough had been accumulated, was redeemed for china. The premium had a picture of a grandmother, said to have been Gilman's own. He sold exclusively for cash and all stock was inventoried at cash prices. A team of white horses drew his products through the streets and his wagons and stores were always painted red. Gilman believed in the power of visual advertising. With the aid of his partner and manager George H. Hartford, he opened successive stores throughout the country, until he had 290. Then he refused to add one more to this chain. His first store was at 290 Spring Street. His post office box was 290. There was for him magic in the number and he refused to change his luck. A store had to be closed to open an additional one.

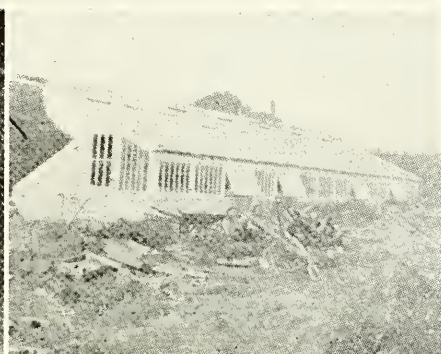
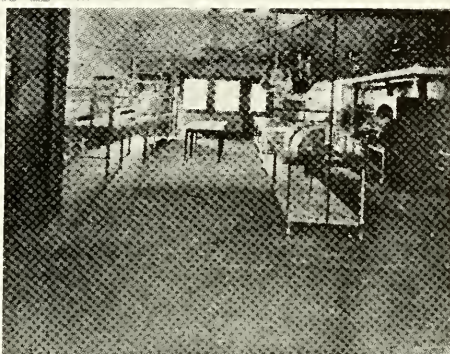
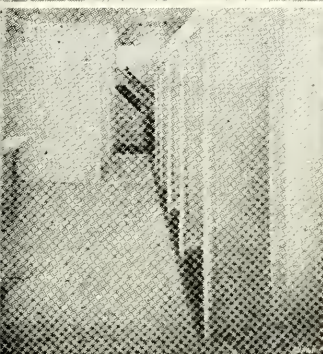
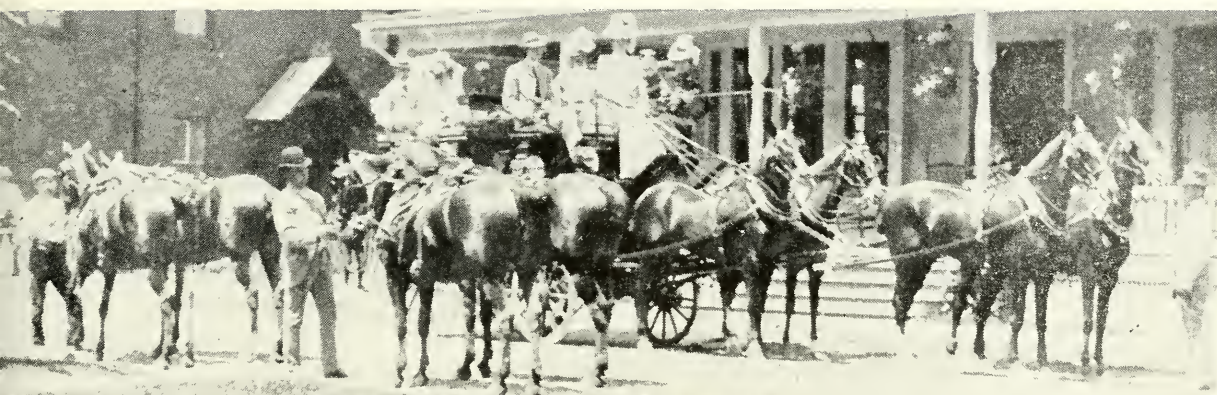
Gilman came to Black Rock with his wife. Legend does not say who recommended the spot to him but he thought it good for his health, and soothing to his 60 year old nerves. His first home in the section was on Grovers Avenue in the old colonial house built by Nehemiah Burr in 1762. On November 7, 1894, the house was burned to the ground and Mr. Gilman and his servants narrowly escaped in the middle of the night. Occupants were obliged to jump from the upper windows to save their lives. One of these injured was Mrs. Bertha Chapman, almost constant hostess and chaperon for his house parties. Her daughter later became the socialite Mrs. Gould Brokaw, and still later Mrs. Roelker of Providence and Newport. The "New York

Herald's," James Gordon Bennett's journal, said the house and its contents were valued at \$80,000 and that Mr. Gilman was covered by \$50,000 worth of insurance. A local journal of the period said the house was worth \$20,000 with its contents. For the time being, Mr. Gilman was given sanctuary in the Penfield home nearby, which he later occupied and then abandoned for the Charles Riven house on Ellsworth Street, the latter because there was a plentiful supply of tin bathtubs, an innovation of the era. When Mr. Gilman built his new manor house, known as the Gilman House, he put a bathroom between every other room.

Lillian Nordica, greatest of Brunhildes with whom he claimed distant kinship, was a frequent guest and sang to his guests in the beautiful music room. Nordica was a Maine girl known as Miss Lily Norton, before she made fame as an operatic soprano. George Burroughs Torrey, Bridgeport's painter par excellence and his first wife, were frequent guests. Gilman was one of the early Torrey enthusiasts, in which affection he showed more discrimination and taste than in his sponsorship of later mediocre copyists. Isable Irving, Bridgeport's boast, and her sister Evangeline, were guests at the Gilman mansion, and Mr. and Mrs. Blakely Hall, among others. She was the famous Helen Potts Hall..

Gilman assembled his society friends about him and got commissions for the young Carl Blenner, son of the New Haven pickle maker. Blenner painted beautiful women in the manner of Torrey, and Gilman adored beautiful women. Gilman undoubtedly started Blenner on the road to fame. He arranged a roomful of his works at the Hillside seminary, under auspices of the Ceramic Art Club of Bridgeport. Blenner also painted the young Chauncey Depew, son of the master after-dinner speaker, who was a friend, and legend says, sometimes a guest of the Gilman's.

Gilman's mansion was well staffed. His cuisine was unexcelled. He had an entourage of seven. The famous "John" whom a few knew as possessing a patronymic of Gustasson, was butler major domo, of his establishment and was with him for years. His servants all adored the handsome well-set, heavily built six-footer, weighing 175 pounds, with a smooth shaven face in an era when Dundrearys and mustachios were most formidable. He gave big Christmas parties for his help and presented them with good-sized boxes of A & P Tea and the inevitable coupon which made his fortune. In this casual survey of a genuinely remarkable man, it is impossible to tell whether he pioneered in the presentation of coupons for tea and coffee premiums. He was certainly



Views of
Gilman's Manor House

(Top): Gilman Carriage, photo showing the changing of horses in Milford while on a day's excursion.

(Center, left to right): Turkish Baths, Kitchens, Greenhouse.

(Bottom, left to right): Porch, solarium and dining room of Manor House. Exterior of Manor House viewed from Seaside Avenue.

one of the earliest of the merchants who realized the magic of an accumulation of these little coupons which would obtain for their holders, cups and saucers and dishes of all sorts.

He seldom expressed himself as to his philosophy of his business, but from time to time there trickled through the channels of the business world, such facts as his insistence that each of his stores, an entity in itself, should return a minimum gross profit of \$1 a day. This profit was probably larger when to the stores returns was added the immense trade of the itinerant tea, coffee and spice vendors, as ubiquitous an incident of the American scene of the nineties as the traveling butcher and baker and dry goods peddler. However quiet in person this amazing chain store millionaire boasted there was nothing unobstructive about his stores and his wagons they being always painted red.

When the histories of vast and unique American ventures are written, Gilman must take his place with the great merchant princes, Wanamaker, Selfridge, Steward and Straus..

He was inconspicuous in his charity, never letting his left hand know what his right was doing. He provided for many families in his vicinity and was slyly averse to anyone knowing of his good deeds.

The house was something of an earmark of its owner. Gilman called Edward C. Greening, accountant for his local nephew George Smith, and proffering him paper and pencil, asked him to draw an oblong box. This was the basic design of the structure.. Long corridors ran through the center of the house, on the three floors. Kitchens were added to this crude facsimile of an architect's plan, a conservatory was patched on the porches and portecocheres wantonly added, like currants to gingerbread, at the whim of the imperious owner.

How much the house cost him was never determined. It was not let by contract. Day labor built it, hence its cost was huge. It was wholly in subdued taste, the piece de resistance being the drawing room or grand salon. This was paneled in heavy brown oak. On the ceilings were painted, cupids, bow-knots, and birds on wing, done by a local artist, Miss "Essie" Sautell, who later became Mrs. Griswold. It was the era of Bouguereau, the French painter, introduced at the World's Fair in 1893. America was coming of age in art, when the insipid boudoir charm of the trivial and artificial French school, its bacchantes and nymphs and chaste goddesses, was in apogee.

The millionaire tea merchant was an expansive host, an inveterate entertainer and the multiplicity of guest rooms, all opening upon the long corridors, testified to his hospitable manifestations.

Although he was unmistakably an art lover and helped many young artists by buying their paintings he had an aversion for photographs. His aversion for photographs was no less emphatic than his aversion for mirrors. He never looked into one. He refused to permit them even over the mantles in the bedrooms which the style of the period inevitably imposed. He had a similar aversion for clocks, never wanted to know the time of day and lesser hatred was directed against telephones, just then coming into common use. He hated to be reminded of the passage of time. He never looked at a funeral passing, and though a philosopher of some parts, a man who could quote the economist, Adam Smith, with startling recollections, he would not permit discussion of anything that approached the subject of death in his presence. His friend and protege, Carl Blenner, the painter of beautiful women, one time fell ill in his home and he packed him off immediately to a hospital lest he be reminded of illness or witness his death.

He was not precisely a lord of the manor, but he was a grand host. However, if he were suddenly called to New York on business for the Great Atlantic and Pacific, of which he remained part owner until his death, he was nothing loth to pack off every guest in the house and close it up. His horses were at the disposal of his guests and the stable was one of the finest outside of Pierre Lorillard's in the Ramapos. His love of horse flesh was almost congenital. When he died in 1901, the Waterville Journal recalled his boyhood and young manhood in the town, when he drove a span of white horses, delivering his produce. Later, in Black Rock he often sat on the box and directed his tally-ho to Newport or Old Point.

The presence of youthful guests subdued his fear of old age. Barry Wall, the beau of America, best dressed man in the world, was his frequent guest with Mrs. Wall.

Gilman feared making a will and when he died there was a contest over his estate. Nine nephews and nieces, children of his half brothers and sisters, received legacies which they took as shares in the Company, later to sell them with the reorganization of the A & P, under Hartford's management. Of the large family of 14 brothers and sisters of two families, none now remain in these parts. Gilman's stepmother had been Johanna Boyd, niece of the first governor of Maine and he was proud of his conferred heritage, often speaking of it to his guests at Black Rock.

Mr. Gilman died on March of 1901 after which the estate changed hands several times and most of the pasture land was sold. Simon Lake, the inventor of the submarine, owned the estate for several years. The Manor house was

converted into a residence Club for business men, offering a putting green and tennis court. The Club became Champ's Shore House and was the scene of many banquets, parties and outings. It was used as a roller skating rink. For many years, it was called Floral Park. It later became a rest home called Rest Haven. The building was torn down in 1937 to make room for new homes.



Original Village Shop — This house was owned by George F. Gilman (later of the A & P Tea Co., chain stores). The house was located at the present driveway of the Burroughs Home on Ellsworth Street. The building was moved to its present site and made into a dwelling by Joseph Smith in 1912.



HAMILTON HOUSE — Ellsworth Street, stood on the site of the Burroughs Home. Mr. Hamilton was an executive with the A & P Tea Co., and started there as a tea tester. The house was divided into two and moved to the present location in 1910 by Joseph Smith.



1766—The Joseph Silliman homestead (7)

(Photographed 1873)

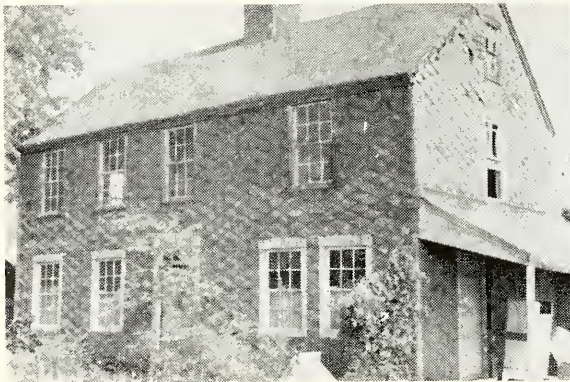
Because Black Rock was so intimately connected with shipping on the Sound, it became the nautical center of this section and many members of prominent families in Fairfield and Bridgeport took to the sea for their livelihood.



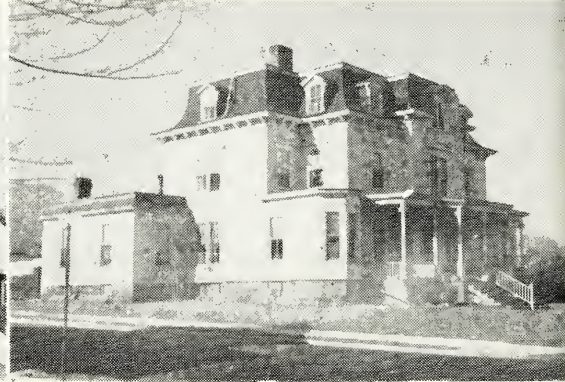
TURPENTINE FACTORY — Located near the docks. It had a tall brick smokestack which was erected in 1869. Loads of Carolina Yellow Pine were discharged at Fancher's Dock. Turpentine, tar and acetic acid were extracted at the Factory. The Harrison family, in the copper smithing business in New Jersey, acquired the Turpentine Factory and operated it until it burned in 1880.



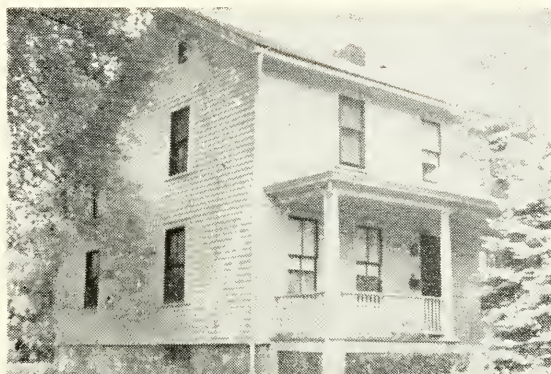
View of lower Brewster St. taken about 1930 by Mrs. Priestly. On the right is the Homeburg house, which is now Fayerweather Yacht Club. In the center, the Fancher house, which is still standing. On the left, the Kate Moore house, torn down in 1930.



FANCHER HOUSE—Haviland St. (Located Fancher's Dock next to Fayerweather Yacht Club). Built by Hezekiah Osborn (1772-1846). Early in the nineteenth century, he came from Mill Plain in Fairfield and had a waterlot surveyed for him "on a wharf lot belonging to John Wheeler" where he erected a home from which vantage point he managed a store and wharf until 1834 when he moved to New York. After this, the house was occupied by three generations of Fanchers. Captain Charles H. Fancher was born in this house in 1853.



GOULD HOUSE - 1875 — 121 Seabright Avenue. The house was built by two brothers, William and George Gould. Their father's house stood next to the Seeley house on Ellsworth Street. The south side of the house was owned by William and he sold it to Joseph Smith about 1906. The north side belonged to George who sold it to Hugo Keller in 1901. Mr. Keller still lives there. The Goulds were builders who built St. Mary's-by-the-Sea Church.



267 Ellsworth Street — 1853 Cyrus P. Spencer; 1888 Hatty Spencer Rodgers (Rodgers was a blacksmith); 1900 Sold to Pahy Dowling who was in the Rum business and for many years had a saloon at Railroad viaduct and Fairfield Avenue; 1917 Mrs. Mary Dowd (Dowd was a coachman for Mrs. Morris and Dr. Hull).



ALLEN HOUSE — 213 Ellsworth St. Captain Charles Allen built house in 1850. He was a sea captain and the son of a sea captain. His uncle was Alanson Allen. He lived in the house until his death in 1911. The house was left to his daughter, Sarah, the wife of Joseph Smith.

59 Ellsworth Street — 1840 Sturges W. Seeley (1825-1905) was a shipbuilder in the Black Rock shipyards. Bought his property from William Wheeler; 1905 Martha Seeley Harrison (1858-1923) Mr. Harrison was a coppersmith whose family came from New York where they owned a coppersmith plant. They took over the turpentine factory and operated it until it burned in 1880; 1923 Nelson Harrison took over family home and still lives there; Standing at the fence are Mr. and Mrs. Sturges W. Seeley. Photograph taken about 1900—fence gone but otherwise house has not changed. On porch are Mr. and Mrs. Sturges Seeley. By bicycle is Nelson Harrison. Photograph taken about 1900—house as not changed.

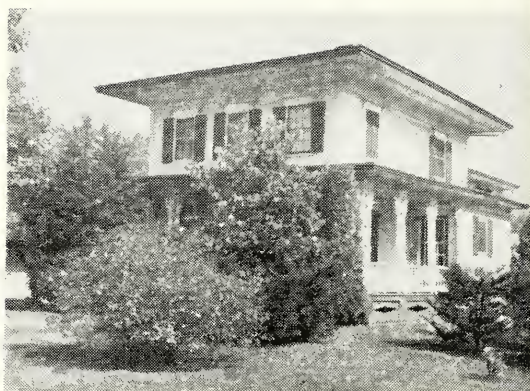


RAYMOND HOUSE — 245 Ellsworth Street. Curtis R. Raymond built house in 1856. He was a boatbuilder and worked at the Hull Shipyard in Black Rock. Curtis Raymond had one son, Henry C. Raymond, who married in 1898 and brought his wife to Black Rock. Mrs. Raymond still lives in the house. She was 94 on April 25, 1953. Mr. Raymond was a foreman on the Bartram Estate.

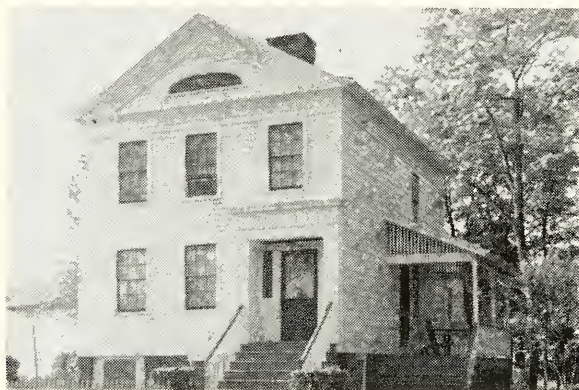
WALKER HOUSE — 250 Ellsworth Street. The house was built by Oliver Walker in 1840. Mr. Walker was a partner in the Walker-Rew Shipyard. The house was bought by Fred Britton, a distant cousin of John Britton. The house, for many years, was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Flicker, owner of the Bridgeport Post. It is at present owned by Joseph Taylor.



SMITH HOUSE — 227 Ellsworth Street. The house was built by Isaac W. Jones (1806-1863), about 1845. The house then had a flat roof. Joseph Smith (1853-1942) married Sarah W. Allen, daughter of Captain Allen, who lived next door. House was passed to Mrs. J. E. Hurlburt, his daughter, in turn it passed to her daughter, Mrs. Viola Hurlburt Carpenter.



BURROUGHS HOME — 228 Ellsworth Street. The house was built by Oliver Burr in 1850. His sister, Abigail, married David Lockwood and lived across the street. In 1860 D. Burroughs bought the house and for two generations his family lived there. In 1942 was sold to Mrs. Eugene Burns, who lives there at present.



BRADY HOUSE — 283 Brewster St. The house was built by George Palmer in 1840. In 1850 Daniel Golding bought the house. He came to Black Rock to manage the tide mills at Ash Creek and built a house on the island by the mill. Later he bought this house. Golding changed his name to Goldin because the original form of Golding couldn't fit on the barrels of flour and for business convenience dropped the final "G"—therefore Goldin. In 1860 James Brady bought the house. The house passed to his son, William H. Brady, upon his death. William Brady lived in the house with his sister, Sara, until his death in 1950. In 1950 the house was sold to Julius Renn.



CAPTAIN JAMES WILSON HOUSE — 166 Brewster Street. Captain James Wilson 1767 purchased land from Ezra and Ichabod Wheeler and built the house now standing. The property was sold in 1775 to Captain Ebenezer Bartram who during the Revolution served actively in the defense of the Connecticut shore. After his death, his son remained in the home until 1818 when upon his removal to Westmoreland, N.Y., the house was sold to William Hoyt and Sullivan Moulton (of Greenwich). Captain Daniel Wilson later purchased the house which remained in his family until after the death of his daughter, Catherine (Wilson) Morrison, early in the twentieth century. The present owner is Joseph Herman.



WILLIAM WHEELER, JR. HOUSE. 1840 — 81 Hackley St. This house was built by William Wheeler, Jr., in 1840. He was the great-great grandson of Thomas Wheeler, who first settled in Black Rock in 1649. Upon William Wheeler's death in 1879, it was sold to George Gilman, who later sold it to Joseph Smith, who retained it until his death when his grandson, Joseph Hurlburt, obtained it. Mr. Hurlburt lives there now.



SMITH HOUSE—118 Ellsworth Street. Built by Arthur Smith 1893. Mr. Smith was born 1847 and went to sea at an early age. He became a captain at 17 of a two-masted schooner in the New England Trade. He later went into the coal business and then began the Smith's Express which he carried on until his death in 1922. Arthur Smith was the son of Elizabeth Allen and David Smith (who was a builder and built many of the old houses in Black Rock.) Elizabeth was the daughter of Alanson Allen, one of the earliest settlers. The house is now owned by Mrs. Bessie Smith Hubbell.



BRITTON HOUSE—Ellsworth Street. It was built in 1836 by Captain John Pierson Britton, (1805-1878). He left the house to his son, John William Britton (1836-1911). After his death it was left to his second wife, Rebecca Brewster Walker Britton, who remained there until her death in 1936. The house has been rebuilt several times and finally two houses were made from it.



ELLSWORTH HOUSE — 115 Ellsworth Street. Built by Verdone Ellsworth (1791-1871) about 1840. It has been the parsonage for the Black Rock Congregational Church for almost 100 years. Ellsworth Street was named after this family.



CASSIDY HOUSE — 691 Ellsworth Street (Corner of Crowther Avenue.) The Cassidy family moved to this house in 1898. Burr family lived there before them and the Warren family before the Burr family.



RONSON HOUSE — 237 Brewster Street. Thomas Ronson was a merchant in Black Rock and later moved to Bridgeport. He died in 1888. His wife Catherine, was the daughter of Captain Job Bartram (Note his funeral expenses under Bartram story.) House was once owned by the George F. Gilman Estates. The present owner is Mrs. Eva R. Meyer.



ST. ANN'S PARISH HOUSE — 481 Brewster Street. This was the former home of Joseph J. Ciglar who built the house about 1910 on the site of the W. L. Burr homestead. The Burr homestead was moved down to Britton Avenue by Joseph Smith. (Pictured on Page 68.)



259 BREWSTER STREET — The house was built by David Smith in 1843, who married Elizabeth Allen. The house was sold in 1860 to William Mather who in turn sold it to J. Brady in 1867. In 1894 James Brady sold the house to Charles H. Fancher along with the barn on 3 Calderwood Avenue, which has since been remodeled into a home and lived in by the W. J. Nolan family. The house passed to Mildred Fancher on her father's death and she in turn sold it to Joseph Sievers.



ALLEN HOUSE—291 Brewster Street. This house was built in 1850 by G. Shelton. In 1875 it was sold to James E. Allen, who came from Boston and was a gardener for Thorne and Gilman. His two sons, James E. Allen and William M. Allen, still live in the house.



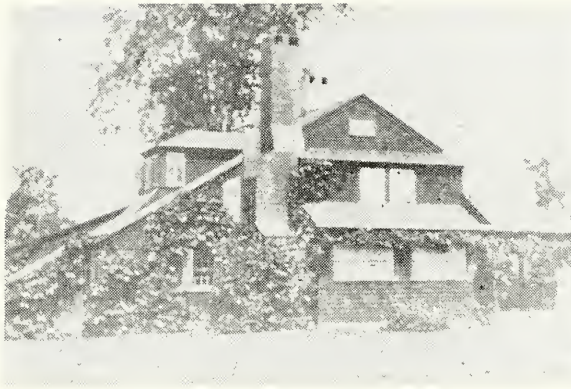
BURROUGH'S HOME — Fairfield Avenue at Ellsworth Street — Built 1903. The Home was started by Catherine Burroughs Pettengill, one of Bridgeport's first and most generous philanthropists, in 1887, for unmarried women, widows, in her father's old homestead on John St., Bridgeport. In 1903 the present structure was built. The above photo shows it as it appeared. *Note trolley tracks and unpaved street.* The Hamilton Estate was located previously on this site, the house being moved to new location on Ellsworth Street, by Albert Borgman shortly after it was built.



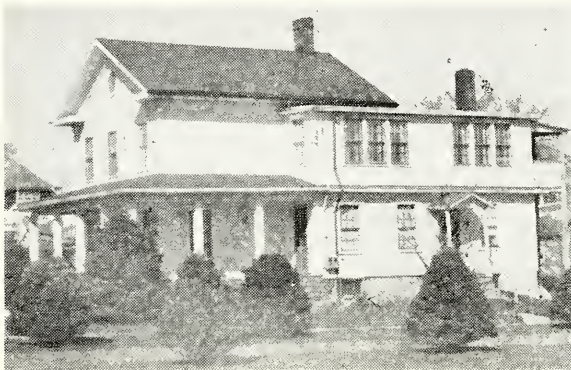
1800—The Gershom Sturges-Benjamin Penfield Homestead (9)

(Photographed 1897)

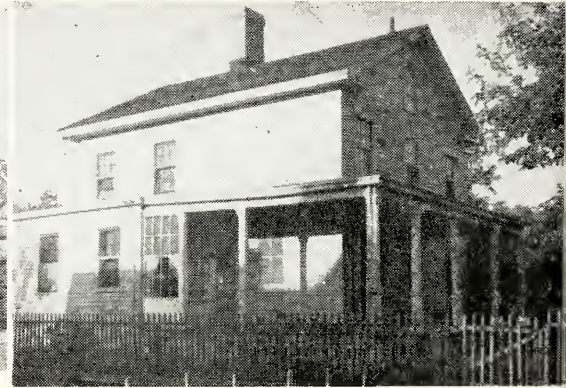
PENFIELD HOUSE—105 Beacon Street. The Penfield Homestead was continuously in the Penfield family from 1836 until about 1942 when it was sold to Marc Bendick, a New York consulting engineer. During the Revolutionary War, the house was a tavern, and many are the stories told of the gay affairs held there. Old folks declare that in the ball room, once a part of the house but now long since destroyed, was a spring floor, which yielded to the steps of the dancers. How George B. Sturges acquired the house is not known, but in 1836, Benjamin Penfield, a well-known sea captain of his time, purchased the dwelling from him. Four years later, his energetic wife supervised the remodeling of the entire building to suit her fancy. The house was stripped to its framework, and that is the reason the heavy old beams are now imbedded in the walls and not in relief as one would expect to find them. Mrs. Penfield also laid out the orchard. The smoke-room and storage room for hams and bacon she retained against the face of the chimney in the attic, and, as they were built of brick they are still in excellent condition. Upon the death of Captain and Mrs. Penfield, their daughter, who had married Captain George Penfield, her cousin, and also a noted sea captain, inherited the building. The house was later willed to Mrs. George Penfield's grand-niece, Mrs. Cornelia Penfield Lathrop. The house overlooks Black Rock harbor, once thought to be growing into a really great commercial seaport. The rooms are sunny and large, and there is a wide hall, in which a beautifully curved mahogany balustrade follows the staircase. Much care was taken in the wood work, which is marked with simple ornamentation. There are many small quaint closets, and several of ample size. The kitchen, with its huge fireplace and mammoth ovens, was recently done over to conform with modern housekeeping. The house is a well-known landmark to residents of Black Rock.



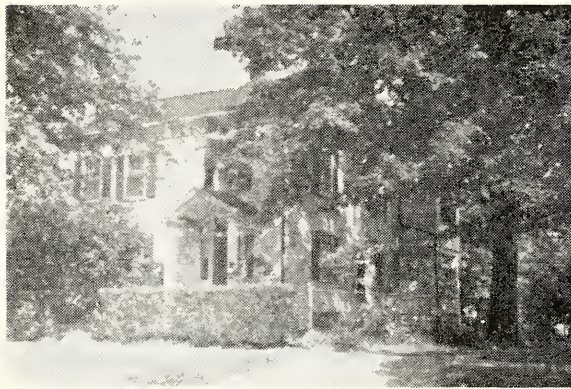
70 Garden Terrace, Corner of Gilman Street. This was one of the Gilman Houses built about 1880. James Duhigg, manager of the Gilman grounds, lived here. It has since been greatly remodeled and the present owners are William Bird and Carl Borgman.



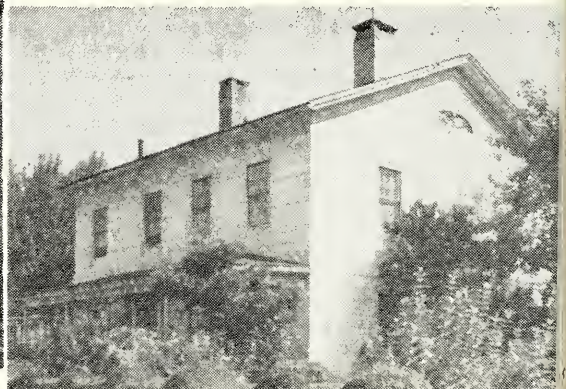
REW HOUSE - 1840 — 318 Grovers Avenue. Built by Rev. Edward T. Rew (1821-1889). His son, Edward and Eliphalet Walker, formed the REW-WALKER Shipyard, which built many fine schooners that sailed out of Black Rock. House was later owned by James Carr who was the boss carpenter of the Gilman estate. In 1895 William White, a stone cutter, bought the house. The present owner is A. H. Ritsul.



LEWIS BURR HOUSE — 120 Britton Avenue. The house was built by Woodruff Lewis Burr (1830-1903) in 1860. He was the son of Lewis Burr, who operated the Burr Coal Company and the middle wharf on Seabright Avenue. The house stood where St. Ann's Church is now and was moved to present location by Joseph Smith to make room for a home built by Joseph Ciglar. The home is owned at present by Mr. H. M. Worthing.



KNAP-BURR HOUSE — 482 Brewster Street. It was given to Captain Wilson Knap by his father Ebenezer Knap in 1813. Captain Knap's heirs sold it in 1830 to Lewis Burr (1806-1886). The Burr family remained in house for 75 years. The present owned is Dr. J. G. Hennessey.



5 Calderwood Avenue — The house was built in 1838. The Aaron Smith family lived here. The street was first called Smith Lane but was later named Calderwood after his wife's maiden name. The present owner is H. J. Thompson.

THE OLDEST HOUSE IN BLACK ROCK STILL STANDS

Built by John Wheeler in 1720



268 BREWSTER STREET—The oldest house in Black Rock. 1720 John Wheeler (1664-1754) built the house for his oldest son, John Wheeler (1694-1725); 1725 upon death of John Wheeler, it passed to his daughter, Abigail Wheeler; 1745 upon death of Abigail Wheeler, it passed to her uncle, Thomas Hill; 1750 Thomas Hill sold house to Captain Ichabod Wheeler; 1799 house was deeded by Captain Wheeler to his grand-daughter Debby Squire, "for care and service in my house since 1793"; 1810 house became the property of Captain David Keeler; 1814 Captain David Keeler sold to Herman Rugles; 1817 Herman Rugles sold to Seth Perry (operated store on wharf); 1823 house was bought by Alanson Allen, who came from Westport. He was postmaster, shoemaker and operator of the village store. He was a school teacher and church deacon. He was married twice and his house was left to his only daughter, Elizabeth Allen Smith upon his death in 1883. She in turn left the house to her son, Charles Smith who also operated the village store after his grandfather's death; 1917 Charles Smith sold house to Slater, a fireman; 1938 Slater sold house to John Gramigna; 1945 John Graminga sold to Eugene Kelly. The present owners are Mr. and Mrs. James R. Brown. The picture on the right shows the house as it appears today.



The oldest house in Black Rock as it appeared in 1823, when it was the home of Mr. Alanson Allen, who is pictured in front of the home with his wife.



CLARKSON HOUSE — The house was built by John Clarkson, Sr., an Englishman. The house was moved from its original location, Fairfield Avenue, corner of Gilman Street, to make way for the Beverly Theatre Building. It is now located on 36 Livingston Street, owned by Harry E. Duffy.



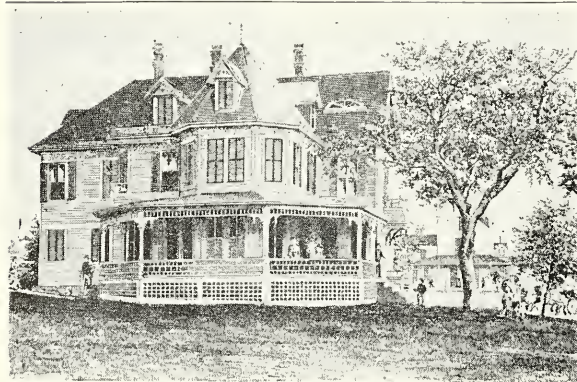
HANSON HOUSE — Home of Hans Hanson was the oldest house on Hanford Avenue. It was built before the street and stood in the middle of a lot with a swamp between it and Jetland Place. The swamp was often used for skating.

BRODY HOUSE — 45 Seaside Avenue. Georgian Architecture—White clapboard house with entrance into large drawing room. The house contains 5 beautiful fireplaces — each one different, two living rooms, library, dining room, breakfast room and kitchen, six bedrooms and four baths. It has the fanwindows on either end of the house and features the paladium windows in the front of the house. The house originally faced Grovers Avenue.



FIREPLACE IN THE HOME

George T. Solly	1848	Land was received from Mrs. Solly's estate, Captain Chas. Penfield, whose father, David, came to Black Rock in 1803. George Solly married Elizabeth Penfield. After Solly's death, in 1872, she married John Y. Provost in 1877.
Mary A. H. Palmer	1883	Mary Ann Howell Palmer was the adopted daughter of the Solly's.
Hollister & Kelsey	1889	
Woodruff L. Burr)		
Charles H. Fancher)	1893	
Charles H. Fancher	1893	Harbor Master, Alderman — came from old Black Rock family. A & P Founder.
George F. Gilman	1897	
Alfred Gilman	1905	
Simon Lake	1915	Inventor of Submarine.
Black Rock Estate, Inc.	1916	
James J. Walsh	1920	
Rosalind Sayte	1924	
Frank B. Hastings	1926	(Tenants— (Whitney—Inventor of Whitney Stoker. (Judge Merritt—Judge of City Court. Attorney at Law and noted Civic leader.
Charles S. Brody	1928	



HILL SIDE COTTAGE



HUTCHINSON HOUSE — Thorne Place, was originally Hill Side Cottage — one of the cottages of the George Hotel. The house is still standing at its original location. The Watsons, Thornes, and Pearsalls have lived in this house at one time or another, while their own houses were in the process of being built.

ORIGIN OF STREET NAMES

Alfred Street—named after Alfred Gilman, step-brother of George Gilman.

Anchorage Drive—Bridgeport Yacht Club was at the foot of this street.

Bennett Street—named after the sister of Mr. Fox's wife.

Bartram Avenue—named after the Bartram family.

Brewster Street—named after the Brewster family. In 1895 it was Black Rock Avenue to Grovers Avenue, then it was Main Street, later it was called Haviland Street.

Burr Court and Road—named after the Burr family.

Britton Avenue—named after the Britton family.

Beacon Street and Place—deeded in 1765, to the town by David Wheeler.

Balmforth Street—surveyed in 1765 by Captain Samuel Burr. In 1895 it was called Beach Avenue.

Clarkson Street—named after the Clarkson family.

Courtland Avenue—named by Mr. Glover of Fairfield who owned property in that area.

Calderwood Avenue—formerly know as Smith's Lane, named after Margaret Calderwood who married Aaron Smith. He and his family sailed from North Haven, Maine to Black Rock in a schooner. They settled in the Lane.

Canfield Avenue—property owned by Mr. Perry, who operated a cider mill, the street was named after a man who worked for him.

Davidson Street—named after the Davidson family who owned the first house on the street. Mr. Davidson was an executive of the A & P Company.

Eames Boulevard—named after George Eames, Park Commissioner of Bridgeport at the time of building.

Ellsworth Street—named after the Ellsworth family, it was known formerly as Church Street, and was laid out in 1802.

Fayerweather Terrace—named originally after the island.

Fairfield Avenue—originally called Beaver Street, Ellsworth Street to Ash Creek 1680-1691, it was called Country Road from Park Avenue to Ellsworth Street around the year 1872.

Fox Street—named after the Fox family whose home originally stood at Fairfield Avenue and Ellsworth Street. It was later moved to Fairfield Avenue between Fox and Bennett Streets.

Garden Terrace—George F. Gilman had his garden here at one time.

Gilman Street—named after Mr. Gilman, founder of the A & P Stores, it was formerly know as Beach Road in the year of 1893.

Grovers Avenue—1680-90 (from the Green to Field Gate) corner Seaside Avenue. Mr. Wells opened a private road around George Hotel in 1896.

Hackley Street—in 1834 it was named after the Hackley family. The house burned down, leaving a barn remaining which for a while was used as a auxiliary school house for Black Rock. Later it was moved by Joseph Smith to a location on Hackley Street. The former name of the street was Wheeler Lane or Wheeler Street.

Haddon Street—named after a famous hall in England, taken from the book "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall" (Major).

Hansen Avenue—named in 1924 after the Hansen family who owned land.

Haviland Street—laid out in 1802, former Main Street. (lower end of Brewster Street.)

Hope Street—laid out in 1873.

Jetland Place—name inspired by Mr. Jones, a very religious man.

Lake Avenue—named after Simon Lake, inventor of submarine, who at one time owned the Gilman Estate.

Morehouse Street—named after the surveyor of the street.

Mountford Street—named after Mountford Clarkson.

Nash Street and Lane—named after the Nash family who lived at 289 Ellsworth Street, in the house now owned by the Elander family.

Orland Street—formerly known in 1896 as Balaris Lane.

Old Battery Road—named after the old Revolutionary War fort.

Penfield Place—named after the Penfield family who owned the mill.

Pearsall Place—named after the Pearsall family.

Quinlan Avenue—named after Judge Quinlan.

Rowsley Street—named after a town in England, taken from the book "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall" (Major).

Scofield Avenue—named after H. G. Scofield, city engineer, who laid out the street, his helper, to drive the stakes, was Capt. James Cassidy, who was a small boy at the time, the date being 1890.

School Street, named after Black Rock School.

Siemon Street—named after Carl Siemon of the Siemon Rubber Company.

Thorne Place—named after the Thorne family.

Wilson Street—named after Howard Wilson of Fairfield who owned the property in 1903.



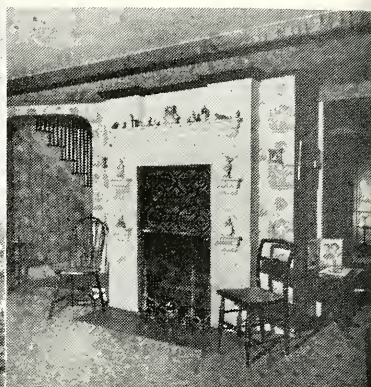
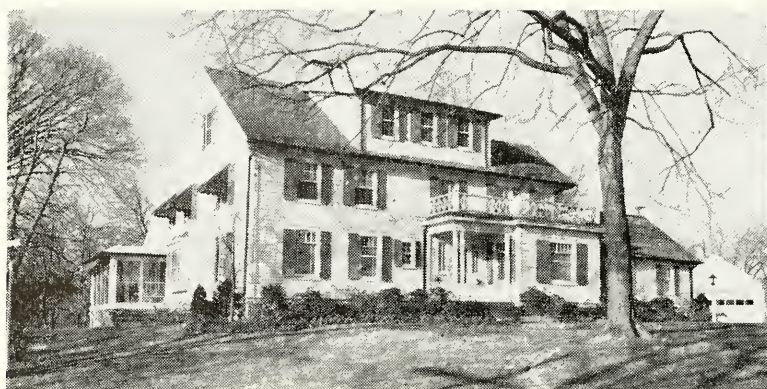
SELECT SCHOOL - 1829 — 103 Grovers Ave. Built by Captain Thomas Ranson, it originally stood on Calderwood Ave. and was used for the Select School run by Mrs. Joseph Bartram, Mrs. Carrie Penfield (1829-1839). The house was moved by ox-drawn wagon to its present location, by the Murray family. It was, at first, close to the road. Later it was moved up on the hill where it now stands. Mrs. Archibald McNeil lived there for many years



PEARSALL, THORNE AND WATSON homes as they appeared about 1885. Right photo same as left photo. Watson house in foreground, then the Thorne home and Pearsall. The Watson house was torn down and a much larger home was built in 1916. The Pearsall home burned and was rebuilt. The Thorne home was remodeled and enlarged.



SAMUELS RESIDENCE — Old Battery Road. The original house (left) was built by Pearsall around 1883. It burned to the ground and was rebuilt by Pearsall (right). For many years, the Van Valkenberg family lived here. However, it is presently owned by Thomas Frouge and lived in by the A. O. Samuels family.

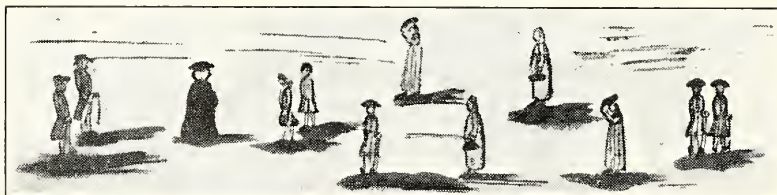


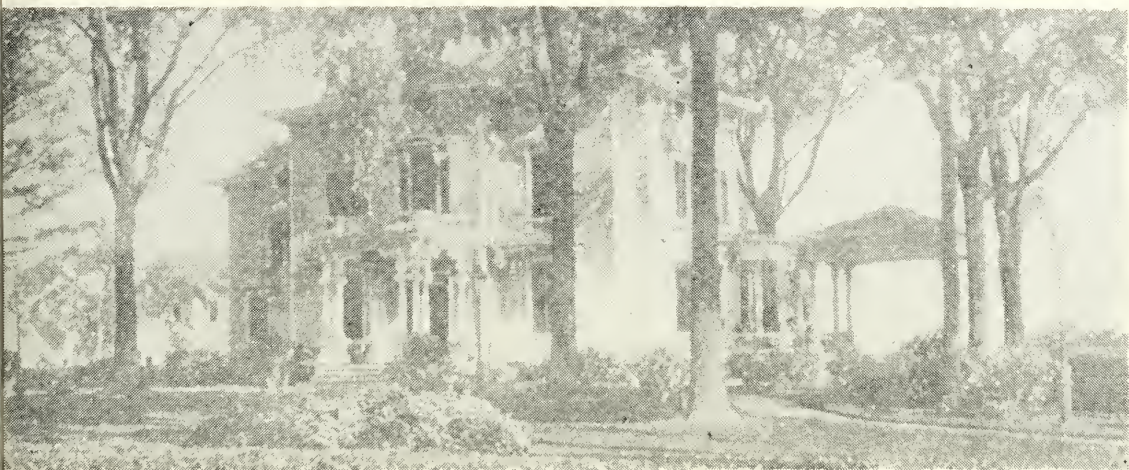
SWANSON RESIDENCE — 121 Grovers Avenue. Built 1762. Nehemiah Burr (1734-1814), about the time of his marriage to Sarah Osborn, built a house at the bend of the old road to Grovers Hill — now the corner of Balmforth Street. Here they brought up a large family. One of his daughters, Sarah, married Captain Thomas Bartram. His son, Noah Burr, died in 1859, and the property was purchased by Captain Benjamin Penfield for his son, William Henry Penfield, whose wife lived there while he saw active service during the Civil War. After the war the house was sold by Captain Penfield, and after several transfers, it was bought during the nineties by George F. Gilman and converted into a studio. Subsequent owners made many alterations and the original outline has been completely modernized. Sigurd B. Swanson, President of Apex Tool Company, is the present owner. At the present time the first floor consists of a large living room containing two unique fireplaces, a dining room, a modern electric kitchen, and powder room. The porch and solarium adjoining the living room have been modernized with louvre windows. The second floor consists of three bedrooms and two baths. The third floor is a complete suite consisting of a living room, bedroom and bath. There are two two-car garages, one of which is attached to the home. The masonry in the basement supporting the fireplace is about 10 feet square and contains an old Dutch oven no longer in use. The home is located on a tract of land covering 1½ acres.



Nehemiah Burr	1762	Served in Black Rock Fort in 1779
Ebenezer Burr	1788	Paid 200 L.
Nehemiah Burr, Jr.	1791	Nehemiah Burr, Jr., died in July, 1814. His son, Noah, lived in his house as did Oliver, son of Noah, until transaction to Penfield.
Benjamin Penfield	1853	Was Captain and owner of ship "Wonder" which sailed between Black Rock and New York. Paid \$900 for house.
Eli Willets	1865	Paid \$2,250
George F. Gilman	1883	Paid \$800
Minnie N. Little	1905	
Rose M. Sprague	1906	Sprague Meter Company founders.
Kenneth W. McNeil	1922	Paid \$12,000
Lily T. Spooner	1926	
Olaf Christianson	1938	Contractor
Max Ams	1940	Son of Founder of Max Ams.
Dorothea Swanson	1950	Sigurd B. Swanson—founder of Apex Tool Company, Vice President West Side Bank.

Title search was done by Attorney Brody.





HULL HOUSE—1865—184 Grovers Avenue

Captain Thomas Holberton bought one of four lots laid out in Black Rock by David Wheeler, 3rd, along a proposed road from Grovers Avenue to the harbor. During the next quarter century, Captain Holberton's property here and elsewhere in Black Rock became involved in so many transfers, mortgages, and releases (doubtless in proportion to the success or failure of his many shipping ventures) that the ownership of certain lots is not always definite. It appears, however, that in 1793, "the dwelling house where Thomas Holberton now lives," previously quitclaimed by the Captain to Robert Wilson, was sold to Samuel Sherwood.

In 1796 the new owner moved to Ridgefield, deeding the house to Captain Thomas Bartram, who also purchased the three adjacent lots, secured a release of the road from the town, and in 1800 (presumably when his own house was completed) transferred the entire property to his brother, Captain Job Bartram, who had recently married Captain Holberton's daughter, Ruth. In 1817 Captain Job was drowned off the harbor, but his family retained the homestead for many years. It was torn down to make way for the house built on the property about 1865 by Dr. Calvin E. Hull, which is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Erwin J. Panish. Col. and Mrs. S. W. Roessler lived in the house previous to the Panish family.



166 GROVERS AVENUE—this house has been the residence of Dr. Harry Resnik and his family since 1948. Originally constructed by Charles V. Barrington, subsequent owners were Albert W. Smith, Alfred Seaman, and Samuel Cone (an official of the Casco Products Corporation.) It was in this house that Mrs. Albert Smith convened a neighborhood meeting to discuss the overcrowded conditions at Black Rock School. At this meeting the Black Rock School Parent Teachers' Association was started.



109 GROVERS AVENUE—Jeremiah Jennings (1799-1875). The house was built by Mr. Jennings in 1870. Mrs. Ten Eyck lived in the house for many years. The present owner is the DeLamater family.

THIS INDENTURE, made this 5th day of April A. D. 1817 between
Joseph Lockwood of Black Rock in the County of Fairfield on the one part
and Alanson Allen of Fairfield in said County on the other part
~~of~~ ~~and~~ ~~under the age of twenty-one years, at the one~~
~~part and~~ ~~at the other part, wit-~~

nesseth, that the said *Joseph Lockwood* bath placed and bound his said *Minor*
son David Lockwood an apprentice to the said *Allen*

to be instructed in the art, mystery, trade, and occupation of *a shoe-maker*.

which the said *Allen* now uses, and to live with, and

serve him as an apprentice, from the date hereof, until he, the said *David Lockwood*

shall arrive at and be of the age of twenty-one years, which will happen on the 20th day of February.

A. D. 1832 if the said *David* so long lives; all which time the said

David as an apprentice, shall faithfully serve, and be just and true

unto him, the said *Allen* as his master, and his secrets keep, and his

lawful commands everywhere willingly obey; he shall do no injury to his said master, in his person, family, property, or otherwise, nor suffer it to be done by others; he shall not embezzle, nor waste the goods of his said master, nor lend them, without his consent: he shall not play at cards, or other unlawful games, nor frequent taverns, or tipling houses, or shops, except about his master's business, there to be done; he shall not contract marriage, nor at any time, by day or night absent himself from, or leave his said master's service, without his consent; but in all things, as a good and faithful apprentice, shall and will behave, and demean himself to his

said master, faithfully during the time aforesaid. And the said *Alanson Allen*

on his part, for the consideration of the premises, doth covenant, and agree, to, and with the said *Joseph Lockwood*

and with David each by himself, respectively and jointly, to teach and instruct the said *David*

as his apprentice, or otherwise cause him to be well and sufficiently instructed and

taught in the art, mystery, trade, and occupation of *a shoe-maker* after the best way

and manner that he can; ~~and to teach and instruct him the said apprentice, or cause him to be taught and in-~~
~~structed to read and to write, and to explain as far as the four first rules of arithmetic, to guard his morals, and~~
to train him to habits of faithfulness, industry and economy. And that the said master will provide for, and al-
low to his said apprentice, meat, drink, washing, lodging, and apparel, for summer and winter, on common and
on holy days, and all other necessities, in sickness and in health, proper and convenient for such an apprentice,
during the time of his apprenticeship; and shall and will give to said apprentice *two good suits*

of clothes when he is somewhat thin, when he arrives
at the age of twenty-one years.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said parties have hereunto interchangeably set their hands and seals, the

5th day of April

A. D. 1817

Signed, sealed, and delivered, }
in presence of }

Joseph Lockwood
Alanson Allen

Alanson Allen

Joseph Lockwood



THE LOCKWOOD HOUSE as it appeared in 1881. The house has since been lowered and a veranda added.



DAVID LOCKWOOD HOUSE—191 Ellsworth Street. This house was built in 1840 by David Lockwood. It was left to his adopted daughter, Mrs. Lockwood Mansfield. It was later sold to Homer B. Davis, who now lives there.



TREAT HOMESTEAD — 40 Beachview Avenue. Mr. Treat built a boat house 30' x 14' in Black Rock Harbor. He and his family lived in it for two years. In 1913 he bought land on Beachview Avenue and towed the boat there. They lived that winter and the summer of 1914 in the boat ashore. Little by little, Mr. Treat added on rooms until now he has a very comfortable home where he lives with his daughter, Mrs. Priestly and his grandchildren.



DAVID TRUBEE HOMESTEAD—1864. 2550 Fairfield Avenue corner of Ellsworth Street. In 1896 it was sold to W. A. Bradley, boss of the carriage shop owned by George Gilman. Upon his death, it was inherited by his daughter, Mrs. Mary Nichols. It was later sold to John Bodnar.



HAMILTON HOUSE — The other half of house pictured on page 60. It stood on the site of the present Burrough's home. Mr. Hamilton was an executive in the A. and P. Tea Co. House was divided into two and moved to its present location on 573 Ellsworth Street (about 1910). Present owner is Mrs. Anna Blozzon.



BUCKLEY HOUSE — 89 Grovers Avenue

This house was built in 1807 by Ulrich Buckley on lower Brewster Street on a lot purchased from Nathan Wheeler. Captain William Hanford Nichols enlarged the house for his children and grandchildren. The house later became an addition to the Bartram holdings and was moved by barge, across the harbor to its present location — the corner of Grovers Avenue and Old Battery Road. It was the residence of Mrs. Mary B. Henshaw and her daughter, Mrs. William Paxton, 3rd, of Sailors' Lane for many years. The present owner is the Naramore family.



FROUGE RESIDENCE—Old Battery Road — originally was the Thorne home. It had been rebuilt many times. For a long time it was occupied by W. G. Bryant.





THE FRASSINELLI RESIDENCE

OLD BATTERY ROAD — Formerly the Daniel G. Patterson home ROSE COTTAGE was a rose colored cottage located originally near the Armitage house, on the shore line. The Thorne and Pearsall families lived in this house while their own homes were being built. After completion of the Thorne home, Rose Cottage was moved to its present location. Mrs. Thorne used Rose Cottage as a studio. One wing of the building was made into a gardener's cottage. This wing was later moved next door and was occupied by City Attorney and Mrs. Swartz. In 1924 Kenneth McNeil bought the property and made many alterations. In 1926 Dr. Patterson bought the property. In 1951 Mr. Fred Frassinelli bought the house and has made extensive alterations.



ROSE COTTAGE



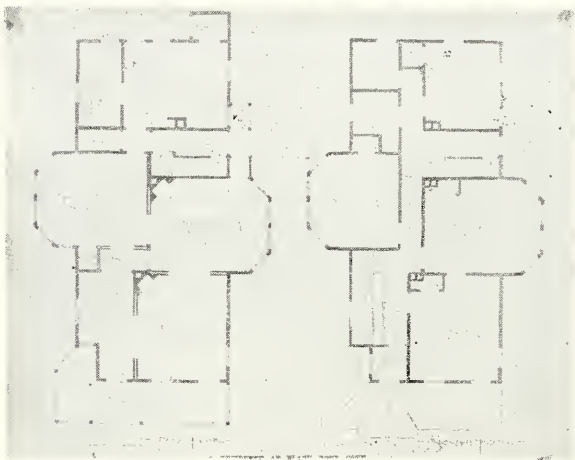
HORAN RESIDENCE

This house was located on Fairfield Avenue at the east corner of Railroad Avenue.

Built about 1888, by James Horan, who came to Bridgeport in 1874 from Hartford to work as a gardener for Mr. North. Mr. North owned extensive holdings in Black Rock. Along with the house Mr. Horan conducted the florist business, which, at one time grew to include twenty-two greenhouses.

The dwelling cost \$6,000 to build. Foundation was of blue cut stone, the exterior was clapboard with shingles intermingled. The roof was Bangor slate. One feature of the house was its large hall and grand staircase. First floor consisted of parlor, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, hall and pantry. Second floor — four spacious bedrooms, smoking den, bathroom, and linen closets.

The house was torn down in 1936. However, the flower business was later carried on by Stephen D. Horan, and is now conducted in the P. O. Arcade by Stephen J. Horan.



THE JAMES V. JOY HOUSE — Old Battery Road. House was originally built about 1888 as one of the cottages to the George Hotel. The house was then located on the shore front, later, being moved to its present location, on Old Battery Road. It was the home of Dr. Thorne, son of Jonathan Thorne, who built the estate on Eames Blvd. (now the home of A. O. Samuels).

Note of interest: Dr. Thorne died last year in Greenwich, Conn., his estate was valued at five million dollars.

From 1920 to 1926 property was owned by Kenneth McNeil. From 1926 to 1935 house was owned by Province Pogue of the G. H. Walker Investment Brokers. Mr. Pogue did extensive alterations and improvements. In 1935 it became the home of James V. Joy, president of the Joy Insurance Company, and president of the West Side Bank and Trust Co.



BLACK ROCK MANSE COST ALMOST \$1,000 — IN 1801



THOMAS BARTRAM HOUSE — 427 Brewster Street

Captain Thomas Bartram (1771-1838) whose name figures prominently in many land transactions in Black Rock, bought from Joseph Squire in 1801 the land on which he erected his home and to which he added acre after acre by purchase from his neighbors. The home remains in his family (the longest consecutive tenure recorded in Black Rock) having passed to his second son, Captain Thomas Burr Bartram (1803-1886) and his family. The present owner is Mrs. Harry Bartram.

Thomas Bartram, self-made man and founder of the Bartram fortunes which have spread out into millions and over many miles of territory, got his start in life by accounting for every single penny. Blacksmith, livery-stable proprietor and shipowner, he turned everything he touched, if not to gold, at least to good honest copper and silver, and when he spent out his hard earned savings, he noted each transaction down in his great, calf-bound account books.

The fine house he built at Black Rock still stands at the corner of Bartram avenue and Brewster street and after 154 years, is still occupied by his descendants. The present owner is Mrs. Harry B. Bartram. The carefully kept

account books are preserved, too, bearing mute testimony to the methodical thrift of their compiler.

The name of Bartram is inextricably interwoven with the history of Black Rock, although Bartrams were not the original settlers. For Black Rock, unlike any of our other settlements hereabouts, was originally the stronghold of a single family . . . the descendants of Thomas Wheeler. For almost a century, this family held undisputed sway on the acres between what is now Bridgeport proper and Fairfield.

It was David Wheeler, his grandson, who first opened up the family reaches to outsiders, and sold off land to Captain Joseph Silliman and Captain Thomas Holburton, who immediately removed thence. A short while after, wharfage land was sold to a group of 13 Fairfield residents and sometime before 1775, Ebenezer Bartram, Jr., of Fairfield, purchased one sixth right to a wharf which had been opened up by David's cousin, Ichabod. The Bartrams had arrived at Black Rock. Members of the family have been there, ever since.

EBENEZER SETTLES IN

In 1775, Ebenezer Bartram purchased the house which Captain James Wilson one of the 13 early comers to Black Rock, built in 1767. Here he brought his wife, Mary, daughter of Captain John Burr of Fairfield, and here he lived the remainder of his life.

Four of his six sons either followed the sea, or had their living therefrom. Three of the four died in the course of their nautical adventures.

There was Joseph, the eldest. He was born in 1760, and was a lad of fifteen when his father moved from Fairfield to Black Rock. Joseph was apparently engaged in some sort of shipping business, and on October 12, 1787, he set sail from Black Rock harbor bound for the West Indies. He was neither master nor member of the crew, but simply as a passenger, according to an entry for that date in the diary of William Wheeler. He died at sea, en route homeward, of causes not stated in that remarkable chronicle.

The next son was Ebenezer, who seems to have stuck to the land and who moved to New York State in 1818.

The next was Thomas, who died in infancy, and then came Job. He followed the sea and captained his own ships. Job married the daughter of

Captain Holburton one of the "F. F.'s" of Black Rock, and came to an untimely end on October 28, 1817. With Samuel Morehouse, he had gone fishing "off the Bar," and the next day the boat was found, "bottom up." Relying on the redoubtable William Wheeler, we learn that the body of Morehouse was recovered almost a month later, and had apparently been awash for weeks. Mr. Wheeler described the circumstance, and this early diarist is nothing if not graphic. On November 18, the mortal remains of Captain Job Bartram were recovered and consigned to the earth, at Fairfield.

DIED OF YELLOW FEVER

Our Thomas, builder of the house at the corner of Bartram avenue and Brewster street and keeper of the accounts, was the fourth son, and Barnabas was the youngest. He followed the West India trade, like his older brother, and he died of yellow fever in the West Indies, in 1803.

Thomas Bartram was married to Sarah Burr in 1797. The extant record of his business transactions commences in 1801, the year he set up his house at Black Rock, and continues through 1835, three years before his death. There are three volumes preserved, covering the years between 1801 and 1819, and the period from 1830 to 1835. Two and perhaps three volumes, from the period 1819-1830, are missing, but the surviving closely written tomes give a more dramatic record of the creation of a Yankee fortune than any novelist's pen could have written.

A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS

Here, between the straggling lines of somewhat faded writing, the reader is confronted by the image of Thomas Bartram . . . the cautious young man, starting out on his own, making grist of all that came to his mill. Dickering in horses. Dickering in real estate. Dickering in wood-selling. As well as dickering in cattle. Setting up a small, independent money loaning business, and ultimately, turning to the sea and its returns to found the basis of a great financial dynasty.

So were most of our Yankee fortunes created. It was different in the South. There, prosperity came almost unsolicited. The climate, the soil conditions, slave-trade and slave-holding, all set the stage for the triumphal entrance of the star, King Cotton. The show was on, and carried itself almost, without a great deal of backing from the supporting cast of planta-

tion owners. The applause rolled in money, in ever increasing and staggering sums, and the great Southern fortunes came into being.

Perhaps the comparative ease with which the South began to strike it rich in the closing years of the seventeenth and came into its own in the eighteenth century may have accounted, to a large extent, for the rapidity with which that same section lost its golden touch, after the Civil War. The Southern capitalist had no protracted period of training at wresting wealth from every transaction, of making the last cent out of every deal and passing up no chance, however small, of turning a penny, and when the system to which he was accustomed broke down, he was unprepared to scurry around for a substitute.

But men like Thomas Bartram, accustomed by heritage and training in Yankee dickering, were prepared to fight through any situation. The crippling of Yankee trade, during the 1810-1814 period, would have put a crimp in the sails of less determined business navigation, but the Yankees simply turned their backs on the sea, more or less, and looked inland for profit.

They found it. Thomas Bartram's day books commence with the year 1801. The first entry is characteristic of the careful disposition of the gentleman. "Book bought of Seth Perry, December 24, 1801," he writes, and the purchase price, 6-6-, as follows:

The first page contains an itemized account of the costs of his new domicile, a rendition of expenses which throws an interesting light on early 19th century building costs. Two thousand feet of boards, at \$19 a thousand, cost the builder 11 pounds, 8 shillings, the pound being approximately worth a little over three dollars at the then rate of exchange.

This system of carrying the price of individual items in dollars, and the totals in pounds, shillings and pence is interspersed with pages kept in dollars and cents exclusively. The currency system here was so new and the Americans so accustomed to the English system of reckoning, it took some years to get into the way of the new.

The accounts at this time include, also, the cost of construction of barn and blacksmith shop. The complete outlay for the transaction was 310 pounds, 12 shillings and 11 pence. This included masons, joiners, fence construction and even a board bill for the joiner (unnamed, alas) and an expenditure of



BARTRAM HOUSE — 427 Brewster Street

Looking south, on Brewster Street, about 1910. It was then called Black Rock Avenue.

Photo Courtesy Thomas Colwell.

four pounds for carting the brick to the spot. Listed as an expense, but charged up to the house account for there is no price following, is "cake for raising." There is no mention of rum, cider or other beverage for this occasion, so perhaps Ebenezer provided the liquid refreshment for his son's house raising.

So Thomas Bartram had built him a house, and a barn, and a shop. Being a prudent Yankee, he kept his property in good shape. In 1812, he evidently had the domicile painted, and now he listed not only cost but names of those employed. Will Hoyt and T. Cook Wordin sold him the paint, at a cost of \$99.75. Paint was dear in those days. Elijah Turney and Equire Nichols evidently did the work, the former receiving \$6 and the latter \$8 for their labors.

Nothing was too small to be taken into consideration if it promised returns, and nothing was too great to be dared, by this Federal tycoon. In his smithy, he performed the various tasks of his trade. He mended a "dung fork for Samuel Nenfield," and collected 2-6 for the job. He performed a number

of other small jobs, such as repairing a hatchet, making an ax, etc., and took in exchange one saddle and bridle, the bill rendered having amounted to three pounds, and the stirrups to the saddle being listed as Bartram's own, probably made by him for Penfield at some past date.

THE LIVERY BUSINESS

Then there was the livery business, from which he reaped considerable returns. "Horse to Bridgeport," "Horse to Mill River," "Horse in Carriage to Town" are among the items wedged in here and there over a period of years. Between March and July, 1804, Lewis Goodsell, Jr., hired a horse eight times, to take him to Newfield, and the price for all trips was 12 shillings, about 20 cents a trip.

There is of course no accurate allowance made anywhere for depreciation, and the totals were not net profit by any means, but as you turn the yellowed pages, you are astonished at the constant increase and the amazing versatility of the man.

There was the sheep and wool business. Wool sold in the year 1809, on the date of July 18, brought him in \$1,200.

This may have been public vendue at Fairfield town. Nabby Squire bought six pounds worth of wool, and paid cash on the spot. Hannah Burr evidently had a big family to provide for, and her purchases amounted to 30 pounds, also paid. Eben Bartram, the non-seafaring brother, who with his wife and family was then living in the older house, down the street, to 26 1-2 pounds worth, and evidently on credit, or as a gift, for "no pay" appears on this entry. Buckley, Bradley, Wheeler, Sturges, Wakeman, Hubble, all are listed as purchasers.

TOOK HALF THE INCREASE

The actual sheep raising business is also listed as a separate series. During the period 1812-1814, Thomas Bartram handled blooded stock on shares. The term, used in his books, is one familiar in the language of the Scriptures. For he took sheep of other men, probably with an overstock and insufficient pasturage, for a period of time and at the end of a stipulated interval, returned wool and a portion of the "increase." The following series of items, under date of September 29, 1813, gives the picture.

Took of David Ely —

1 full blood ram, 2 seven eights ews, 8 three-qrts ews.

To keep three years to return half the wool and keep half increase yearly.

Thomas Bartram was in the wood business. In November, 1813, he bought of Abner Seeley "1 acre woodland" at Chestnut Hill, and paid the astonishing sum of \$110 the acre! This a scant two months after he had purchased residential property near his home from Will Hoyt for \$25 an acre. But Thomas Bartram was no fool and he knew what he was getting before parting with his hard earned shekles. In the month of December alone, he sold \$95 worth of wood, presumably off that piece, and still had probably not begun to touch the timber thereon. He was a charitable man, and one load had gone to "Widow Hidgson" from whom he had exacted "no pay."

In 1810, Thomas Bartram evidently managed a sale of woodlot for his sister-in-law, Deborah Bartram, widow of the Job who died of yellow fever seven years before. She is billed for the work, and the items include "4 sheets paper for advertisement"; "half day putting up do" (they were evidently broadsides); "half day marking woodlots"; "\$2.00 to Nathan Beers, Vendue Master," and an item of \$.75 for rum.

The canny Yankee also ran a sort of loan business. He apparently discounted notes for half of Black Rock and Fairfield. But it was in the shipping that he made the bulk of his fortune.

The sloop *Rising Sun* was his first craft. He was only part owner, to begin with, and the ship was built at Black Rock in the year 1804. Her first voyage, made that year, brought him \$1,000 and his expenses were considerable. He apparently bought her rigging in New York, and her mast, at a cost of \$5, in the same city.

In 1805, she brought him \$2,000; in 1806, \$2,319, and in 1807, he was the richer by \$3,400 from his investement. By 1815, he was shipping rum to New York and selling it at \$1.35 a gallon. Under the date of September 7 of that year, he sold \$514.00 worth in one consignment.

He had a second schooner now, the *Stamper*, and Samuel Laker was her master at a monthly stipend of \$10. She sailed between Boston, Black Rock and New York. The next year he purchased the sloop *Abeona*, and cleared \$2,515 on the first year. Remember that all this time he was dealing in

retail blacksmithing, taking in a few cents here and a few there. They mounted up.

Of Thomas' children, both his sons, Thomas Burr Bartram and Joseph Bartram, followed in the merchant marine business. Where pennies had been counted a generation before, dollars and hundreds of dollars were scored up whatever that second generation used for account books. The fortune grew, and Thomas Burr Bartram continued to live in the family house. After his death and that of his wife, Miss Alice Anna Bartram, his daughter, resided there. She died in 1930, and her nephew Harry E. Bartram, great grandson of the builder, came to live there. The estate which he inherited from his aunt, over and above his own inheritance, amounted to almost a million dollars.

On his death, by provision of Miss Bartram's will, the dollars made by Thomas Bartram, sheep-dealer, blacksmith, money lender, wood seller and ship-owner, augmented by succeeding generations, will go to the Bridgeport hospital, an institution which would completely have flabbergasted the simple captain to whom the expenditure of \$.83 for white lead was worth recording in full.

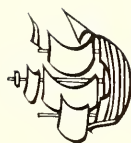
Job Bartram drowned October 28, 1817

Body drifted ashore November 18, 1817

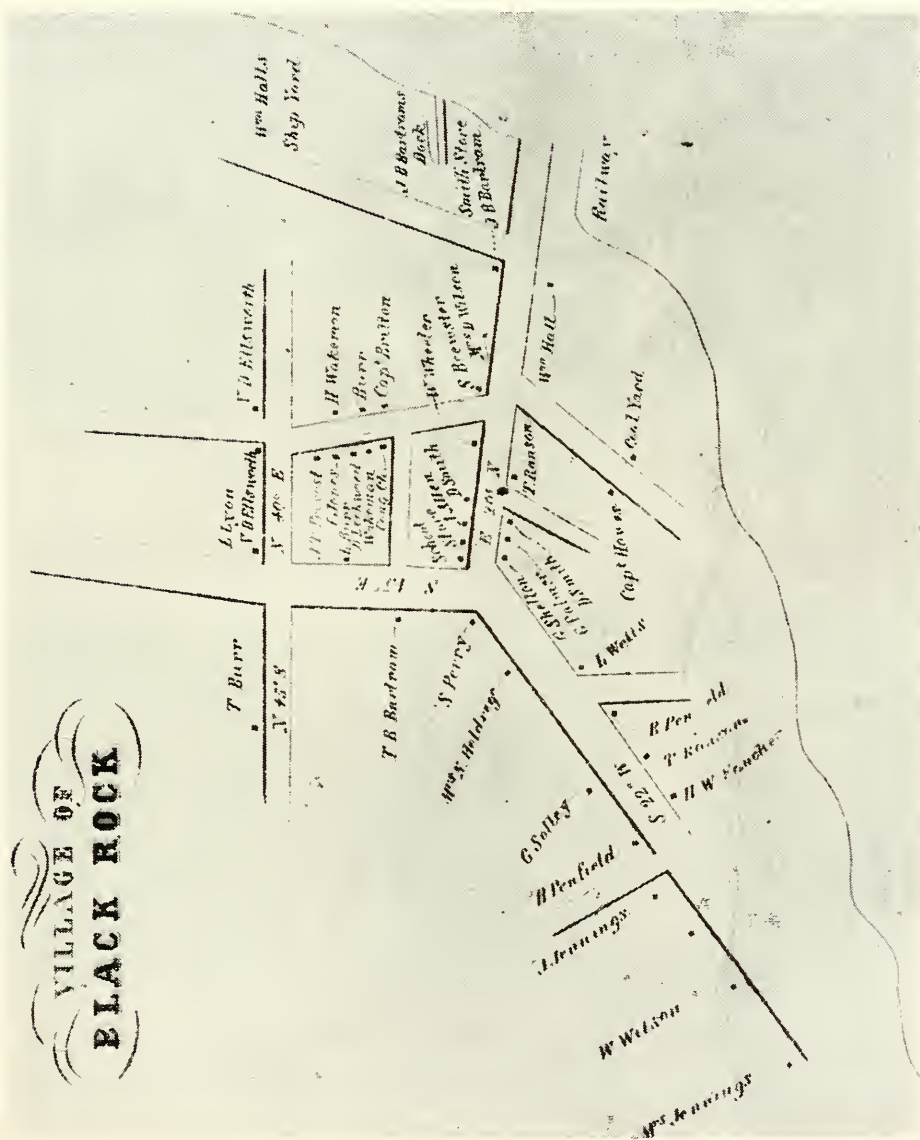
To coffin and sheet—Norwalk	\$6.00
To one quart Rum	.31
To toll going after corpse	.30
Expense on letter	.06
Tolling bell	.37
Paid Nathan Burr Society rate	1.86
	<hr/>
	\$8.60
Paid Kitt digging grave	2.50
	<hr/>
	\$11.10



— 1840 —



Note the streets are given in compass reading. This was common in those days. All the people in Black Rock were seafaring; many of them sea captains.



The Belles of Black Rock -- 1865



Miss Anna Jane Burr, born in Black Rock, first wife of John W. Brittin—period 1850.



Frances Elizabeth Burr married Eliphlet Walker, mother of Rebecca Walker and Sarah W. Brittin.



Miss Catherine Wilson daughter of D. Wilson, married to Mr. Wm. Morrison.



Miss Sarah Bartram daughter of Joseph Bartram, a leader in Black Rock.



Miss Mary Bertram married Rev. Henry C. Woodruff, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Black Rock



Cornelia Penfield, aunt of Cornelia Penfield Lathrop (author of Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield).

The ladies of Black Rock formed a Social Society and during the Civil War made shirts for the soldiers. These young ladies were daughters of sea captains except Miss Anna Jane Burr, whose father Lewis Burr, was a farmer.



Miss Elizabeth Bartram



Martha Penfield Nichols



Mrs. David Sturges was Libbie Gould



Mrs. David Smith. Bessie Smith Hubbell's grandmother.



Mrs. Viola Smith Gould, wife of Mr. George Gould.



Miss Ella Smith, granddaughter of Mr. Alanson Allen.



ETCHING OF FANCHER'S DOCK

Courtesy of Miss Virginia E. Hall

BLACK ROCK RESIDENT NAMED HARBORMASTER

Charles H. Fancher, 76, retired lobsterman, waterman, mariner, "tide expert" and former alderman of the city of Bridgeport is to succeed William A. Lamond as Harbormaster, when the Common Council holds its February election according to statements made by prominent Democratic officials.

Mr. Fancher was a member of the Council under mayors Dennis Mulvihill and Hugh Stirling.

The wide experience in all things connected with ships and shipping, his complete knowledge of the "whims" of the harbor tides and currents and his keen insight into what constitutes harbor business make Mr. Fancher peculiarly fitted for the position, his supporters say.

Accepted by the people of Bridgeport as a merely nominal post—much the same as that of the poet Laureate of England—the city Harbormaster has hitherto excited no special comment..

This story was written by Major H. C. Morris and is reprinted from the Bridgeport Sunday Post, January 12, 1930.

Beyond the passing of a few heavily laden barges lashed to the side of a tired-looking panting tug, up the harbor, the average Bridgeporter gives but little thought to what sort of business actually goes on in Bridgeport's haven.

The opening and closing of the bridges that span the arms of the harbor to let the water-borne traffic pass means just so much annoying delay to many pedestrians and motorists. They forget that every time one or the other of the bridges is opened the commerce of Bridgeport is enriched. They forget that every barge of coal, every schooner of lumber, every tanker of oil, every overseas tramp loaded with pig iron, and every lighter groaning under its weight of sand means a step forward in the increase and revival of that shipping business that Bridgeport once enjoyed and which gained for her a reputation as a prosperous shipping port.

Life-Long Experience

And so when the announcement was made that a new Harbormaster is to be appointed the public seems to be evincing a new interest in what may be called one of the city's greatest and most valuable assets—the Harbor.

Mr. Lamond's tenure of the office of Harbormaster has been long and honorable. He has seen a vast volume of business moving in the harbor and has been imbued with the steady faith that sooner or later Bridgeport harbor will once more come into its own and make its mark as an important shipping point on the north Atlantic seaboard.

In Mr. Fancher, his successor, the public has a servant who has had a life-long experience in harbor work in Bridgeport and vicinity. He has navigated the Sound in all weathers and in all manner of craft, is familiar with the eccentricities of the local tides and currents and has a great store of knowledge as to what the business of a harbor really means.

Captain Charles H. Fancher was born at the old Fancher homestead at Black Rock in 1853 and has spent his entire life within sight and sound of the pounding waves of Black Rock harbor. For the past 50 years he has lived at the Foot of Brewster street (at Haviland street) behind the old Joseph Bartram residence which was one of the five store houses that once lined the harbor shore in the palmy days of shipping.

No man is more able to talk of those times than Captain Fancher who recalls the early days in Black Rock when the present harbor at the foot of Brewster street was the center of shipping, from which a large fleet of fast clippers operated to the West Indies and returned with "rum and molasses" as well as other valuable tropical products eagerly looked for in Bridgeport at that time.

Sailing and Fishing

Captain Fancher recalls how there were once three sets of marine railways in operation at what is now the foot of Brewster street, in the Civil War days. In the summer season these were constantly in use by ships discharging their cargoes and coming to berth for repairs.

Shipbuilding too, was one of the leading interests of the day, and there are still signs of the battered old wharves which once served the Hall, Rue and Walker, and Henry Parker shipbuilding firms.

Two of the best known ships built there were the "Black Hawk" and the schooner "Equal Rights," leaders in the shipping trade of their day. The latter was so named because three persons contributed equally in the cost of its construction.

When the waters of Long Island Sound were navigable, as a rule, an incoming vessel would be waiting in the harbor, ready to unload when its predecessor had discharged its cargo. A few of the ships were annually stranded here when the winter threw a sudden band of ice about the harbor, while many made a practice of mooring for the winter in the ice-bound waters of Black Rock harbor.

Because Black Rock was so intimately connected with shipping on the Sound, it became the nautical center of this section and many members of prominent families in Fairfield and Bridgeport took to the sea for their livelihood.

Although Captain Fancher spent most of his life in sailing and fishing in the waters of the Sound he never answered the "call of the sea" as a profession.

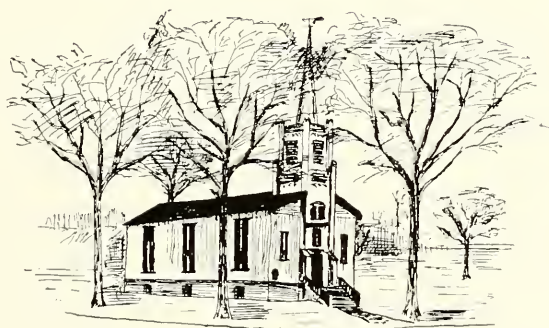
Among the best known skippers he says in the heyday of Black Rock as a navigation center were Captains George Benjamin and William Henry Penfield, Captain Thomas McMullen, Captain Hanford Nicholas and Captains Joseph and Thomas Bartram.

Included with the leading residents of the section were the Bartram, Penfield and Burr families, Levi Lyon, Captain John Britton, and Captain Arthur Smith.

Was Former Alderman

"Before my time Black Rock was part of the town of Fairfield," Captain Fancher told the Sunday Post. "Land grants by degrees transferred rights from Fairfield to Bridgeport until Bridgeport limits extended to Ash Creek and included Black Rock itself in the Bridgeport city area."

Captain Fancher points out that the present Black Rock Congregational church was the first church to be erected in the district, being built in 1849, four years before his birth.



BLACK ROCK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

A tradition handed down to Captain Fancher and given general credence, is to the effect that the name "Black Rock" is derived from a heavy massive dark ledge of rock which runs through the land and sea geological formation of the district. Evidences of this ledge are to be found today in the cellars and basements of many of the old Black Rock houses and along the shore.

According to Captain Fancher, Penfield Reef and the lines of jagged sawtooth rocks that surround this famous point are also parts of this rock ledge.

Captain Fancher first attended school at a private institution conducted by Miss Carrie Penfield on Coulterwood avenue. Later he enrolled in the old Black Rock district school on Brewster street at the foot of Grovers avenue. In this building, which was recently razed, he attended school until his fifteenth year when he went to work as a carpenter's apprentice. After many years as a builder he entered the wholesale and retail lobster business operating small sloops along the coast as far as Nova Scotia.

Serving as a member of the Bridgeport Common Council under former mayors Dennis Mulvihill and Hugh Stirling, Captain Fancher was responsible for the bringing about of many municipal improvements for Black Rock, including the installation of the first sewer line in that section through Ellsworth street via Fairfield avenue to the harbor.

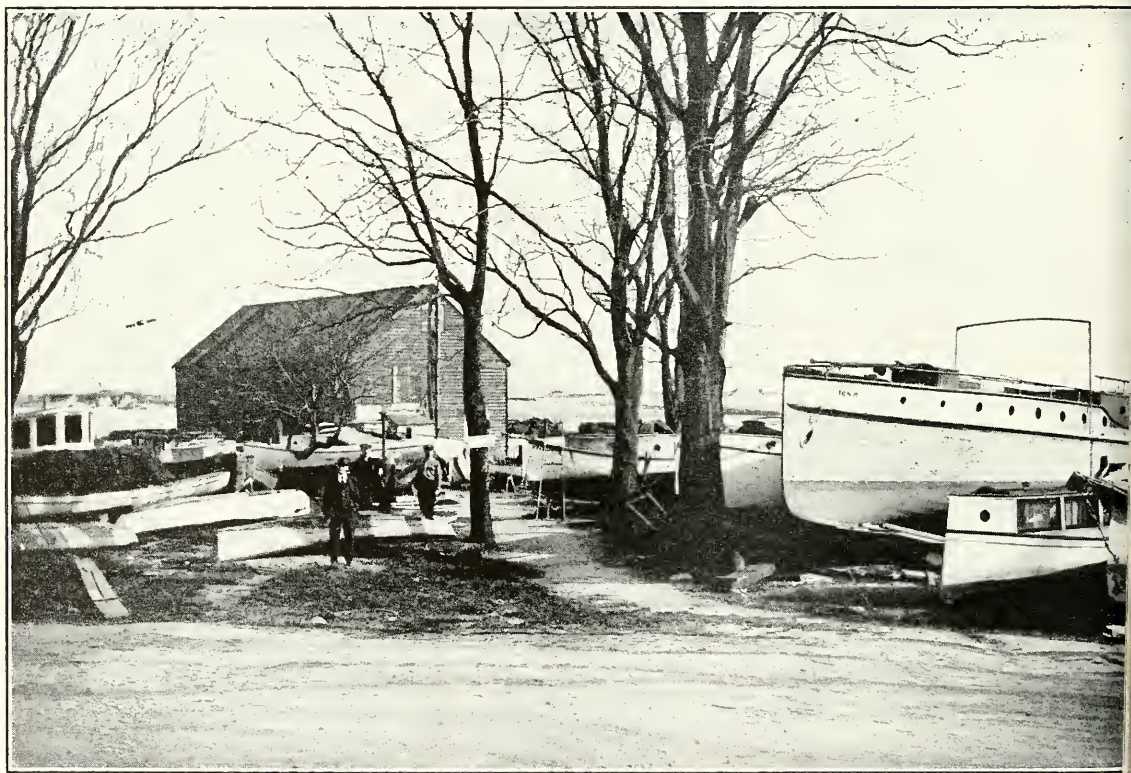
Valuable Trade Puller

On entering the Fancher home one is struck by the fine collection of handsome silver curios and other trophies, always kept polished and in ship-

shape trim. These are happy reminders of the golden regatta days on Long Island Sound under the burgee of the Long Island Yachting association.

Captain Fancher piloted some of the fastest of these craft in races, his best known yachts being the "Tema," the "Viking" and the "Vagabond." One of his most prized possessions in this line is a handsome gold cup won in the Norwalk Yacht club regatta in 1901, as a first prize. A silver loving cup as second prize in the first annual regatta of the Bridgeport Yacht club on August 12, 1899 also occupies a place of honor in the Fancher home.

Captain Fancher says that he is glad to have the honor of being Bridgeport's Harbormaster, feels that there are wonderful possibilities in the post for extensive overseas trade as well as coastwise traffic. "Make the channels deeper" he says, "put up wharves to accommodate big ships and set out to get business for the port and Bridgeport harbor will pay for itself in the long run, besides being a valuable 'trade puller' for the entire community."



Foot of Brewster Street about 1930 — present site of Port No. 5, Naval Veterans Club.

St. Mary's By-The-Sea

1893 - 1925



St. Mary's by the sea was a show place of Black Rock. Standing on the beach this picturesque little church was visible from far at sea.

In 1893, Mr. Pearsall, brought his young wife to Black Rock to live in his beautiful estate. Thinking that it would please her to have a picturesque little church that she could call her own erected near her home, Mr. Pearsall spared no expense in the building of the structure.

The walls, were built of heavy logs, brought from Canada in rafts. Box hedges, neatly trimmed, enclosed the grounds and two rows of high trees formed a pathway to the doors. A wonderful altar, a clear toned organ and a set of specially made chimes were installed and made the church one of the show places of Bridgeport.

On Sunday afternoons Rev. Robinson, former rector of St. John's Episcopal church, came to the little house of worship to preach. While the church was built to accommodate 200 persons, it was rarely that more than 50 or 60 would make the trip by trolley or stage coach to attend the services.

For eight or nine years the church was used steadily. Then Mr. Pearsall died and his death was followed shortly after by that of his wife. In his will, he deeded the church to his friend, Jonathan Thorne, but the Thornes rarely

used the place. For years it stood untouched. During the World War the church gained a lease on life and services were held weekly for members of the naval reserve corps stationed at Black Rock.

But one wedding and one funeral were held in the little church. The wedding was that of Bianca West, well known about the town in 1895. Always on the lookout for something unique or unusual, the tiny church appealed to her as the ideal place for a marriage. The funeral held was that of the wife of a gardener in one of the nearby houses.

1910 the bishop unsanctified St. Mary's church in order that it might be used for any purpose. After Mr. Thorne's death the church was left entirely alone and became a favorite place for tramps. Finally the property was deeded to the City of Bridgeport to use as it might see fit.

The pews, organs, altar and other fittings were turned over to the First Congregational Church in Fairfield. At first it was decided to move the church to Fairfield to be used as a meeting house, but when the cost of the project was figured, it was abandoned.

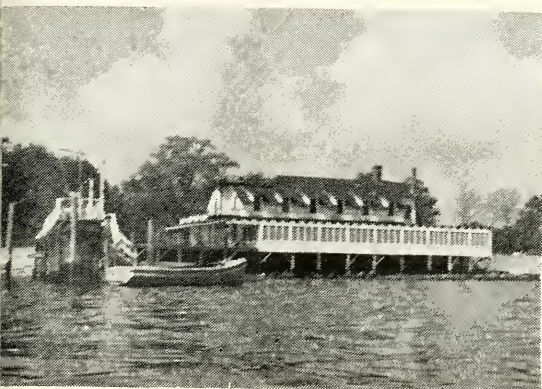
Several years ago the city decided it would turn the structure into a bath house, but the dangerous currents around the place were brought to the attention of city officials and this project was also abandoned. The church was torn down in 1925 to make way for the new road. The residence of Pearsall still stands; more information about the house in section about old houses in Black Rock.



THIS HOUSE was located on the island in Ash Creek. It was torn down about 1935.



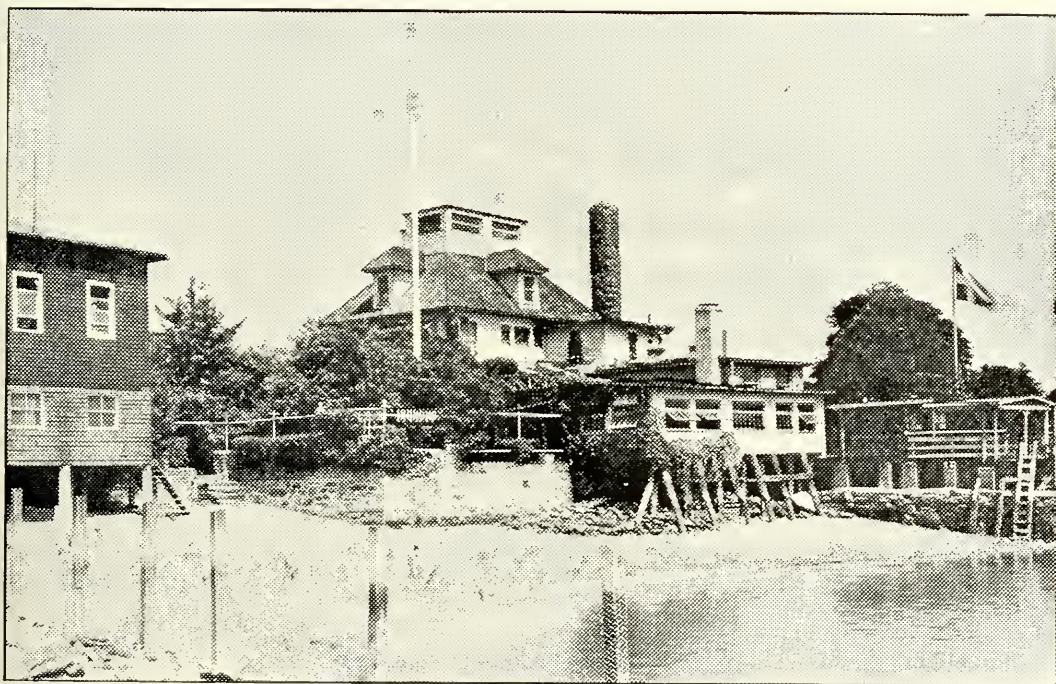
KNUD WILLIAM ADALF EICKE (born 1871). Mr. Eicke ran a meat wagon in Black Rock for over 40 years. He resided at 70 Nash Lane.



BLACK ROCK YACHT CLUB was organized in 1925 with John Field as Commodore. In 1930 it was completely overhauled and a swimming pool was built. The building was first built by Wells, owner of the George Hotel. It was called the Pleasure Hall. After the death of Wells, Thorn bought it and used it for entertaining. It was also rented as a summer house for several years.



THE OLD BRIDGEPORT YACHT CLUB located on Black Rock Harbor at the end of Anchorage Drive. It was torn down about 1919 and made into several houses. A house owned by Mr. Joseph Cone is now located on this site.



S. S. NORDEN SINGING SOCIETY CLUBHOUSE

Built in 1902, on Seabright Avenue, overlooking the harbor. The first director was John Malm. Henry Nyberg was the musical director for over 35 years and he guided the chorus in many big singing festivals.

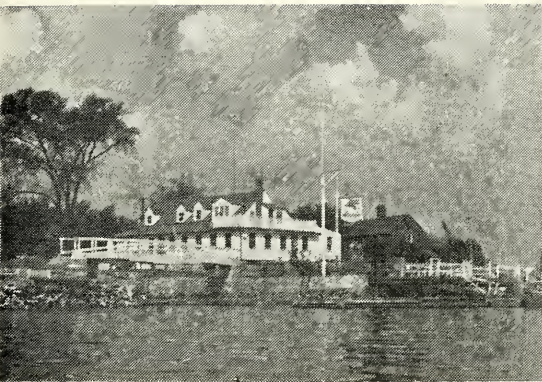
The first organized Swedish Male Chorus was at the University of Uppsala in Lund, Sweden. In about 1840, Swedish settlers started chorus singing here, the Scandinavian Sick Benefit Society Male Double Quantelle—1880; Lyran Singing Society—1889, Scandinavian Saengerbund—1893; Swedish Glee Club—1899. These societies finally emerged into the S. S. Norden Singing Society. Today the Club is mainly social.

On the site of the Clubhouse was once the Wolcott Chauncy House—1769-1805. This house was later used as a wood shed by David Penfield who owned the house across the street. His son, Isaac Chauncy, who was born in the homestead, became a famous Naval hero who rose to Commander. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

30

Scale 30 Rods to the Inch





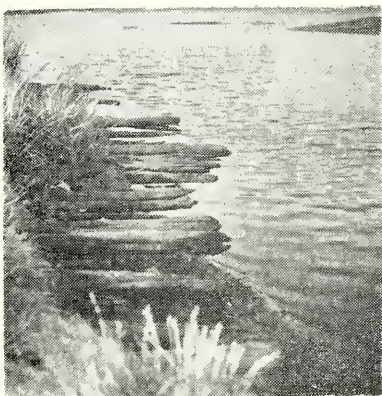
FAYERWEATHER YACHT CLUB—Remodeled from the Holmberg homestead. The slips are the site of shipbuilding and a great deal of sea-activity.



SOUNDVIEW YACHT CLUB
Port 5, Naval Veterans



Atlas of Bridgeport — Roger H. Pidgeon — 1896



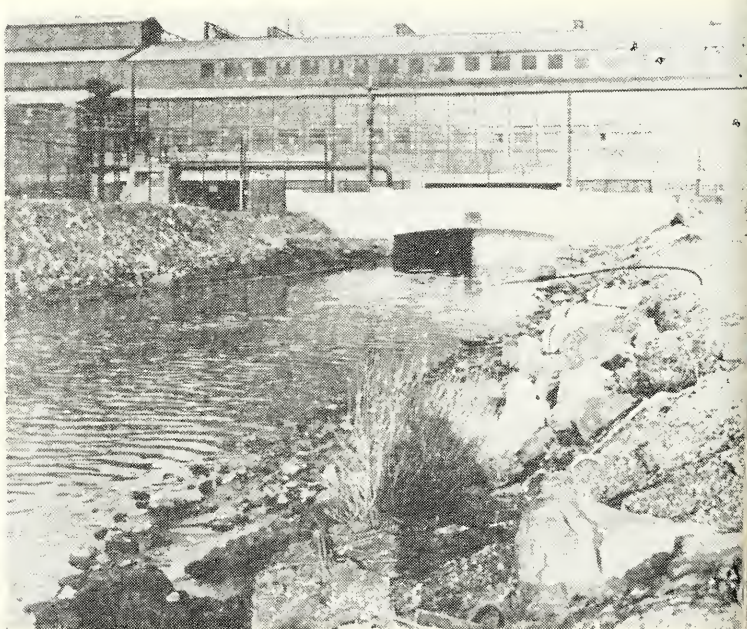
Top left — Site of old Fairfield Bridge from Paul's Neck to Balmforth Street. (Date 1760-1802). Stones of foundation are visible at extreme low tide.

Center left—Old abutments seen in the foreground are remains of old Fairfield Bridge.

Top right—Site of old Penfield Mill in Ash Creek, just above St. Mary's. This dam was torn down in 1795 after a subscription had been raised to give Penfield a sum of 90 pounds for compensation for the destruction of the dam so that eels, clams and shad could again locate in Ash Creek.

Center right—Bullard's Bridge, located on Brewster Street, at Canfield Avenue. Picture was taken looking east. The creek was a great deal wider then.

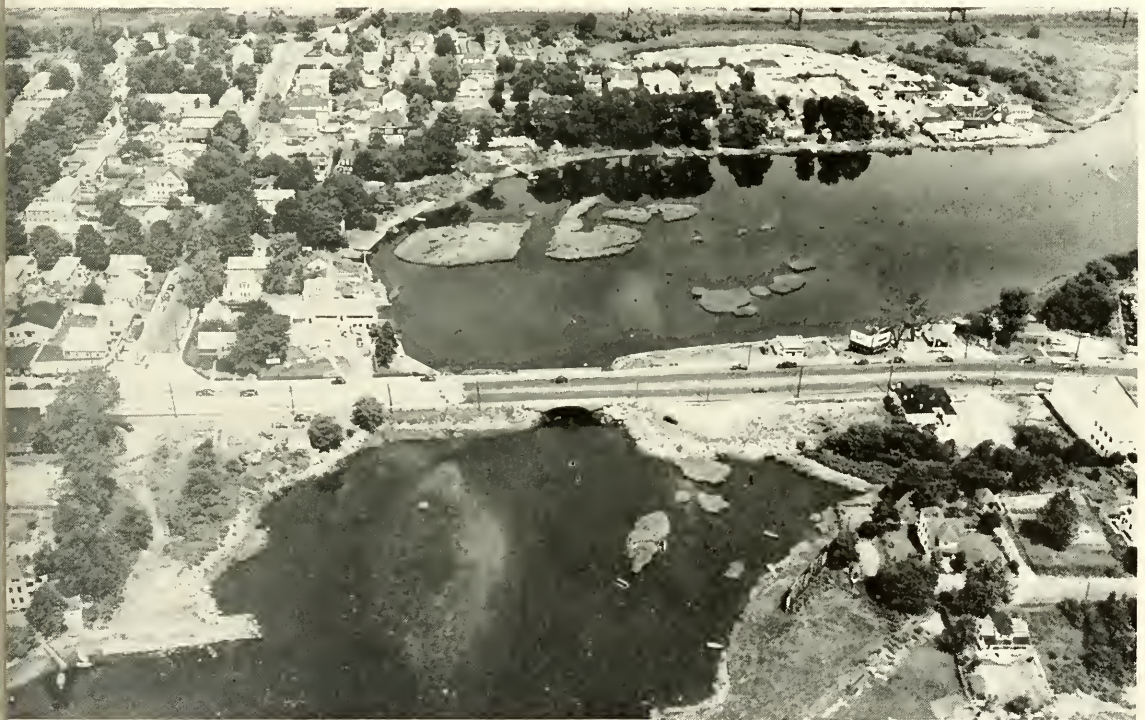
Lower photo shows how Bullard's Bridge looks at the present time.



ASH CREEK BRIDGE



THE OLD BRIDGE connecting Fairfield and Bridgeport when it was a wooden structure. It was sometimes called the Five Bridges because of its construction—being built in five sections with pilings between.



THE BRIDGE TODAY—note area had been filled in, thus shortening the span. It was at the site of this bridge that the first mill of this vicinity was located . . . dating back to 1680.

Ash Creek was originally called Uncoway (Unquowa) River which name came from the Indians who lived in Black Rock. A French frigate fought a running battle with a ship commanded by Benedict Arnold. In this running battle the French frigate caught fire and was beached at the mouth of Unquowa River, scattering debris and ashes the length of the river. As a result of this, it took on the name Ash Creek.

This story is a hand-me-down, no official records are available.

THE GREAT TRAIN WRECK!

Railroad wrecks or like calamitous events appear to come in cycles. Why? No scientist, psychologist or star gazer has been able to tell. Physicists assert it to be mere coincidence.

Observers of human events, though they may not be able to explain them, do know that there is something to this superstition of tragedies coming in threes, however much they may seek to rationalize them by asserting their incidence to be only coincidence. When suicides and murders come in bunches the psychologist may reasonably attribute them to suggestion. But in the case of railroad accidents it is not so simple to trace.

There was a time in the New Haven road system when the corporation, under presidency of Charles Sanger Mellon has such a consecutiveness of serious accidents over a comparatively short period that the unscientific conclusion was reached that the road was "under a jinx."

Not Really a Jinx

The jinx, however, when rationalized, was found to be something more tangible than ill luck. In fact, conditions within the road itself, such as general jitterness of employes, tired workers, worn-out rolling stock, used by Mellon in his attempt to build overnight for himself and his mentor, the elder Morgan, a New England empire of ships, railroads and trolleys, with exorbitantly inflated and watered dividends for stockholders.

Thus science and common sense rationalized the superstition of jinx in the case of the New Haven.

The first of a series of wrecks, if it did not specifically provide a cause for ultimate demolition of the Morgan rail empire, and the deposition of Mellon and a reorganization of the company, at least pointed the way to it. This was the Federal wreck here in Bridgeport in 1911.

Crack Trains Wrecked

Because it had certain analogies to the disastrous wreck of the streamlined "San Francisco" last week in Nevada, the wreck of the crack Federal Express at the viaduct on Fairfield avenue, Bridgeport, bears recalling. In both cases the swank trains jumped the rails, precipitating death and destruction in their wake.

(Reprinted from The Bridgeport Sunday Post, August 20, 1939)

Twenty-four hours before the "San Francisco" was wrecked last week, another wreck occurred in Denver, involving two trains—the Santa Fe's crack "Navajo" and a Denver & Rio Grande-Western passenger train, the collision of which killed two people and injured many others.

The Federal was the first in the series of wrecks which afflicted the New Haven road, which depleted its treasury by necessity of indemnity and, though the fact was unvisioned at the time, it was the beginning of the downfall of the broken-hearted, elderly Mellon and the unscrambling of the New Haven road monopoly by the now retired Justice Louis Brandies of the United States Supreme court.

It was on the sweltering night of July 11, 1911, hot and humid as the present August day. The world was lagging along rather more slowly than today, but there were then vacation seekers, holidayers, as today and many were abroad the swank Federal Express en route from Montreal to New York and Washington, when it pulled out of New Haven more than an hour late, on that fateful morning.

Engineer A. M. Curtis, a freight-engineer had been pressed into service to take the place of the regular engineer, Edward Fowler, who had asked for the night off.

150 Passengers Aboard

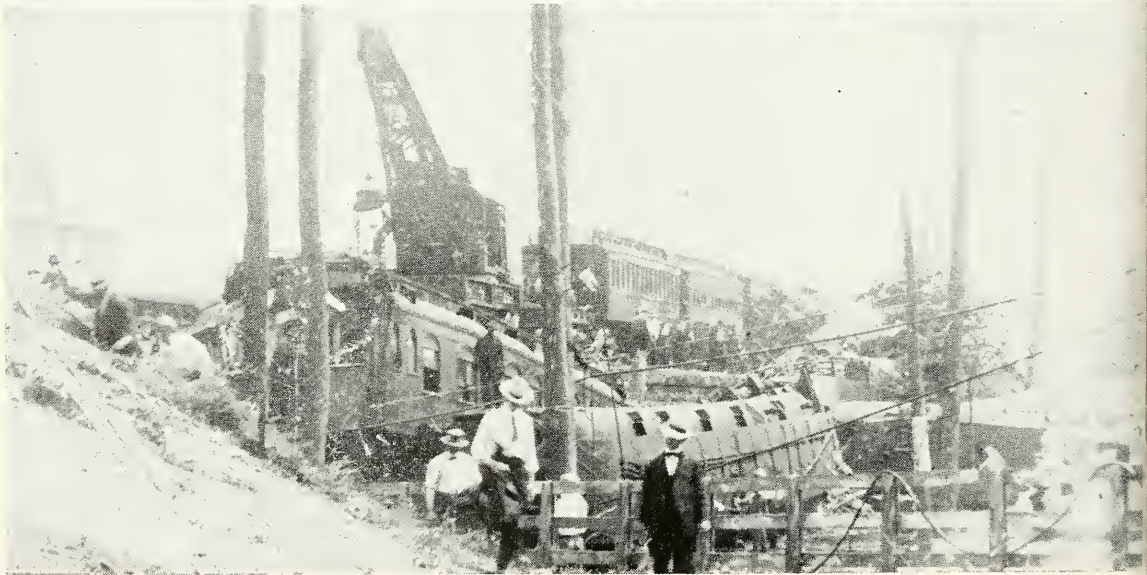
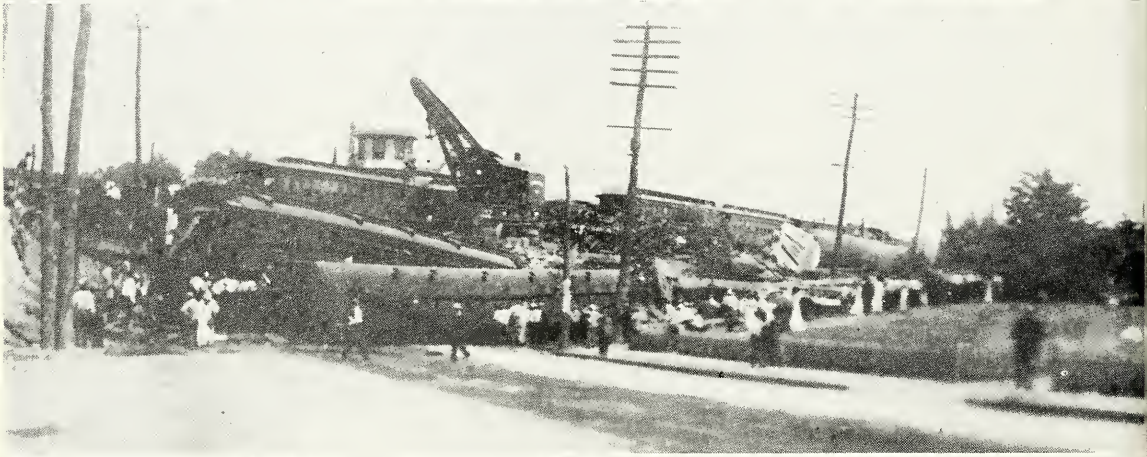
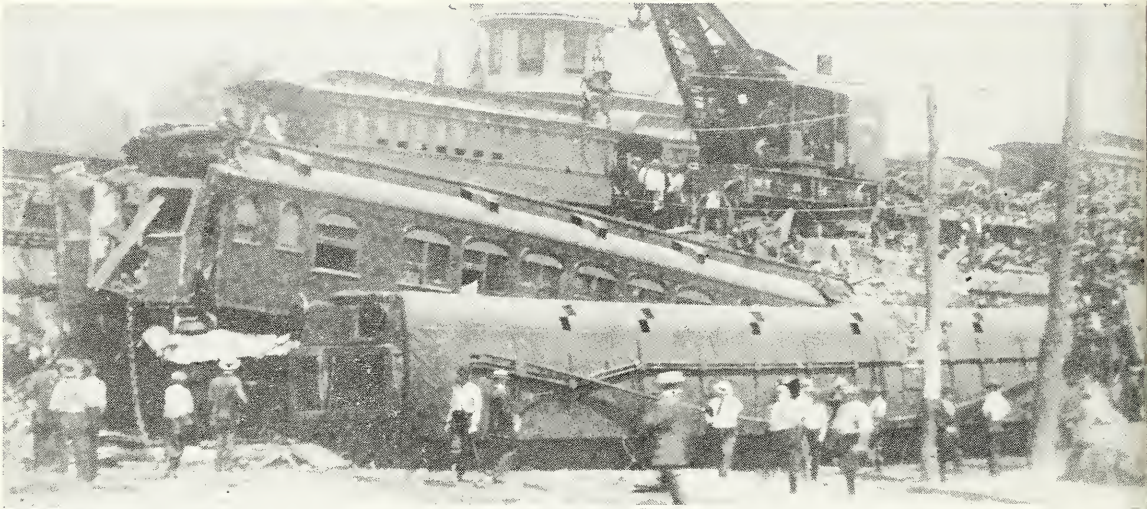
The train had nine cars, with six sleepers. Traffic was more than ordinarily heavy not only on account of the vacation season but also by reason of the fact that a number of delegates of the Christian Endeavor, and members of the St. Louis ball team of the National League, with Roger Bresnahan, were on board. All told, there must have been 150 passengers, in the coaches and three Pullmans . . . persons of wealth and influence generally in their community.

The majority of them were sleeping, either in the Pullman berths or in the coach seats, unaware, like the victims of the San Francisco flyer, of the fate that was to be theirs. Their day of destiny was at hand, however.

The city was in darkness, at 3:15 o'clock. A few tortured souls unable to bear the heat, remained awake.

A Mirage to Watchman Skelly

Watchman William B. Skelly, of the Bridgeport Vehicle company, looking out of his window, waiting for dawn at the viaduct above him on Fairfield avenue, almost abutting upon the Horan property, saw what he believed to be





At Railroad Viaduct and Fairfield Avenue, 14 died, 50 were hurt.

*(Wet Glass Plate Camera)
Photos by Albert Borgman*

a mirage . . . a heavily loaded train, going at a mad speed, plunging over the embankment and down into the street in Fairfield avenue . . . that is, as much as he could discern.

He seized the lantern and rushed to a scene which marveled Dante's *Inferno* in its terror, although the full import was not immediately born upon him. At almost the same time Patrolman Riley, patrolling his beat at this point, heard a crash, saw an unusual electric display, and such cries as never before pierced the still air of the sultry July morning.

Riley saw the huge locomotive plunge down the embankment with the cars in its wake. These two men were apparently the first to arrive at what turned out to be one of the most disastrous wrecks on the New Haven road, right in the center of Bridgeport, since the East Norwalk wreck of 1853, when on March 5, 1853, 44 lives were lost in a drawbridge disaster. Among the victims of this earlier wreck was Dr. Samuel Beach of this city.

When the toll was taken, at the scene of the wreck and hospitals of the city, St. Vincent's and Bridgeport, 14 were found to have been killed, among them the ill-fated Curtis, engineer of the Federal.

His body was found in one section of the debris, far separated from his head, found in the wreckage of the telescoped coach 100 yards from the engine.

The scene was of utter darkness. Piercing and harrowing cries of the wounded and dying filled the air. It took no stretch of the imagination to see that the tardy engine, traveling at the rate of 60 miles, on the track over the viaduct—when 15 miles an hour was legitimate—had jumped the track at the switch, in trying to take a new crossover, installed three weeks before, and tumbled into the roadway—the huge locomotive going one way and dragging some coaches after it, and the other coaches going another way.

The Pullman sleeper containing the St. Louis ball team stood miraculously poised over the embankment, and did not topple over. Three Pullmans, two baggage cars and a day coach between the baggage-mail car and the Pullmans were reduced to splinters. Telephone and telegraph poles in the vicinity were crumpled like paper. Pieces of granite and masonry weighing tons were dislodged from the viaduct and iron girders were twisted and broken off by the impact of the smash. Curtis had not seen the caution signal in time to slow down for the crossover and sent 14 to their death and maimed scores of others.

In the day coach between the baggage car and the Pullman, most of the dead were found. One hundred and fifty yards from the crossing the leviathan locomotive's remains, a mass of twisted iron, with its tender demolished, were found.

The locomotive was on the west side of Railroad avenue with the baggage and mail cars, next to the viaduct, where they landed in breaking away from the locomotive.

The third coach landed in John Horan's lawn, with the adjoining Pullman on its top.

The section of the picket fence separating the Horan property from the railroad's property was shattered by the crash and sections of it were used for stretchers, for the dead and dying.

Heroism Aplenty

There was heroism aplenty, testified to by the survivors, among police, passengers and the general public. The wreckers from New Haven were two hours late in arriving, and the police and physicians did work of mercy and salvage, unaided by technicians.

The fatally wounded were not of Bridgeport, but among them were children and babies whose piteous cries wrung the hearts of the rescuers. Mary Louise Rogers, the seven-months-old daughter of Mrs. Gwendolyn Rogers, wife of George E. Rogers, sergeant in the United States Army, was one of the victims with her mother. They had been in the ill-fated day coach. Afterwards Rogers settled with the New Haven road for \$6,500.

The largest death claim then possible in the state was \$5,000, and there was implied criticism in journals of the day of the manner in which the road's legal adjusters scattered among the wounded and dying, attempting to settle to forestall suit. The cost to the company of the wreck was half a million dollars, and that, which was followed by the Westport wreck and later the wreck of the Bar Harbor express in New Haven, the third in the calamitous series, left the road cognizant of the fact that it was losing money by its old dilapidated rolling stock.

Engineer Blamed at First

However, at the inquest which Coroner Clifford Wilson held in private and was therefor severely criticized, there was no hint of inferior equipment. That came later in the Bar Harbor and Westport inquests, and the dead engineer Curtis was held blameable for the tragedy. For a time his body lay unclaimed and indifferently in the morgue here.

"He is not a member of our organization," said a railroad man.

The Bridgeport Standard of that day observed that not even his wife had come to claim the body. Even his family, apparently, spurned the man re-

sponsible for one of the most disastrous wrecks on the New Haven road. There was no hint in the inquest that Curtis had been overworked, although later in the inquests into the subsequent wrecks, it was brought out in the case of the Westport wreck that the dead engineer, Doherty, of New Haven had worked over ten hours the day he took out the fatal locomotive in the train wreck which killed several members of the Brady family of New York and the Garvans of Hartford. Facts like these later accumulated to bolster up the charge of mismanagement of the Mellon regime.

Among the Victims

Other victims of the Federal here were Mrs. Charles D. Wolcott, wife of the secretary of the Smithsonian Institute of Washington, D. C.; C. W. Christie, of Philadelphia; George E. Saunders, of Norwich; George H. Hartman, a three-year-old boy, and several of the train crew. Fireman W. A. Ryan and Engineer Curtis jumped with the crash, were caught in the debris, and, according to a newspaper account of the day, were "reduced to pulp."

Fortunately the wreck did not take fire, else scores would have been burned to death. Fire Chief Edward Mooney, with his men, arrived quickly on the scene with hatchets and saved the lives of several passengers by chopping through the roof of the sleeper, and raising the debris of the telescoped day coach.

Chauffeur George North of the police patrol was sleeping on a couch, unable to stand the heat of a bed, when he heard the crash. Arriving quickly he saved several lives by pulling the victims through the window of the overturned Pullman.

The lusty cry of a babe of a year, piercing the black inferno, attracted Patrolman John Barton to a coach and he extricated the tiny victim. Mrs. Walter C. Clephane, of Washington, one of the victims, called Barton a hero. There were many unsung heroes among laymen and physicians.

Physicians Worked Valiantly

Drs. Andrew McQueeney, Robert J. Lynch, H. R. Bennett and W. J. Greenstein, worked valiantly transferring the victims to the Bridgeport and St. Vincent's hospitals.

"It was the worst sight I ever saw," Dr. Bennett reported.

Some of the victims went insane with pain and horror when they arrived at the hospital. One woman victim was delivered of a child in the hospital shortly after the wreck.

Investigators went to work. The Interstate Commerce commission ruled that 15 miles an hour on a viaduct such as Fairfield avenue's was legal rate of speed. The forty-seven victims in course of time left the hospital and the wreck was all but forgotten . . . forgotten until the summer of the next year when a similarly disastrous wreck of the road occurred in Westport, near Benson road.

Then followed in September, 1912—the wreck of the swank Bar Harbor express at New Haven—between times a number of smaller wrecks on the New Haven, all of which reinforced the phantom of the “jinx,” all contributing with other circumstances to seriously cripple the road, for the time being.



PHOTOGRAPH taken looking East on Fairfield Avenue by Morehouse Street. In the background is the Dubigg Store, the house on the left is on Fox Street. First trolley came in 1894 — the last in June 1937.



PICTURE taken when the Railroad ran on ground level —about 1900.



FEBRUARY 1913—The burning of three houses owned by Mr. Sven Swanson, father of Sig Swanson, president of Apex Tool Co. The houses were rebuilt identical to the original ones.



GEORGE WEISING'S AUTO TOP SHOP as it appeared about 1925. Building located next to the Ritz Ballroom.

Remember When?



Spalla's Barber Shop in the early twenties.



Carlson Grocery Store on Fairfield Avenue near Brewster Street.



1917—Old open trolley car on Fairfield Avenue at Brewster Street. The building in the foreground (corner Fairfield Avenue and Brewster Street) was later moved down Brewster Street to make room for the new Black Rock Bank Building.



Fairfield Avenue looking East from Brewster Street.



DUHIGG STORE—Corner of Fairfield Avenue at Fox Street. Mr. Edward Duhigg started the store in 1901 when he was 21 years old. The building was torn down in 1926 and the present building was erected. Mr. Duhigg developed and owned most of Fox Street, Morehouse Street and Bennett Street. He also owned the block of stores between Fox and Bennett Streets.

BLACK ROCK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH - 1849



The Church Edifice at Ellsworth Street and Bartram Avenue

The House of Worship erected by the First Congregational Society of Black Rock, was dedicated to God on August 8, 1849. On the 11th of September, 1849, a special council of ministers convened therein to assist in the organization of the church. 24 members having been dismissed from the First Church of Christ in Fairfield, Conn., for that purpose.

On application, this church became associated with the Fairfield County West Association at its annual meeting held at Stamford, October 7, 1849.

In 1886, a chapel was erected at the rear of the church edifice. In 1922, this chapel was removed to another site on the church lot, and replaced with the "Woodruff Memorial," erected in memory of Rev. Henry Collins Woodruff, pastor, 1881-1922, a period of forty years, by his wife, Mary Bartram Woodruff.

At a meeting of the church, February 9, 1850, Rev. William J. Jennings was invited to become the first pastor, and he was ordained and installed April 9, 1850 (salary \$500.00 per year), and dismissed October 6, 1857. His successors have been: Rev. Marinus Willett, 1858-1861; Rev. A. C. Baldwin, 1861-1866; Rev. F. W. Williams, 1866-1874; Rev. Howard W. Pope, 1874-1881 (salary \$1,200.00); Rev. Henry C. Woodruff, 1881-1922; Rev. Charles H. Cleveland, 1949-1952.

At a meeting of the Male members
of The First Congregational Church in Fairfield,
residing in the village of Black Rock, Conn.,
held at the store of Mr. Hanson Allen, Sep. 3rd, 1849,
it was unanimously resolved, that we do
proceed to take the necessary steps to organize
ourselves into a separate Church of Christ, to
be denominated "The First Congregational
Church of Black Rock".

Whereupon, it was voted unanimously,
that Thomas Ranson, Seth Perry, & Hanson
Allen be a committee to take the proper &
necessary steps, to carry out the afore-men-
tioned resolution.

William Wheeler
Clerk

(Copy from Church record books)—This is the resolution to form the Congregational Church, September 3, 1849. The store referred to was located on Brewster Street, below Grovers Avenue. William Wheeler (clerk) is the one who kept the journal on Black Rock that was the basis for Mrs. Lathrop's book, "Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield."

Church Buys Site on Harbor

At a special meeting of the First Congregational Church of Black Rock in January of 1955, it was voted to purchase a four and a half acre shorefront site at 184 Grovers Avenue. Plans toward eventually establishing its entire activities at the new location are being developed.

The church building, now at 161 Ellsworth Street, cares for the activities and spiritual needs of about 1,000 persons, churchmen explained.

The estate, extending 475 feet along Black Rock harbor, formerly was the home of Col. S. W. Roessler, U. S. Army engineer in charge of Bridgeport harbor activities. The main building was erected about 65 years ago. (Pictured on Page 75, the Hull House.)

Purchase price is reported to be about \$60,000.

The church was prompted to this action because of inadequate facilities at its present location to take care of its fast growing work, it was explained by a spokesman. It has one of the largest Sunday schools and young people's works in the state, he said.

More Urged by Pastor

The pastor, the Rev. Harry L. Cox, in his message to the church, stressed the fact that present indications point to the need for added facilities in all departments. He urged the church to "have the vision and faith to take this great step forward."

The planning committee, in its report, told of its study of sites both within and outside of the Black Rock area. The committee was unanimous in its conclusion to recommend this site in order to keep its identity in the section which it has served so long and which it hopes to serve to an even greater extent. In its decision the committee took into account not only the beauty of the tract but the ample space for such desirable features as off-street parking, it reported.

The church will take possession of the property about May 1. The residence will be put to immediate use, but further building plans will not proceed until the building fund is adequate.

The Black Rock church has had a vital part more than 100 years in the spiritual life of Black Rock. The church was formed in the days when Black Rock was a village in the Town of Fairfield. It seemed, the committee said, "a happy coincidence that this church, whose early history was linked so closely to the sea, with many of its parishioners sea captains, should now have this unique location on the harbor front."

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



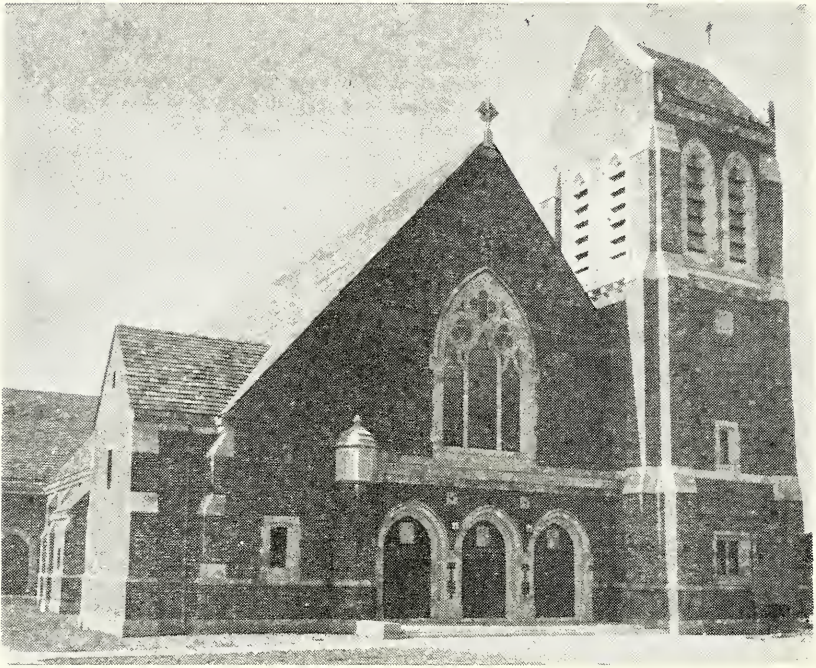
ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH—Midland Street and Jetland Place

The first work of the Lutheran Church in this community traces back to the organization of a Sunday School forty-four years ago. On May 12, 1907, ten children met under the leadership of representatives of the Salem Lutheran Church. After meeting in varied buildings and homes, property was purchased on Princeton Street on March 31, 1911, for \$600.00. At that time there were thirty-eight pupils and seven teachers. The chapel on Princeton Street was constructed in 1912. Here the Sunday School met regularly year after year as a branch of the Salem Sunday School on Park Avenue.

The Congregation's first meetings were held at St. Andrew's. Later the meetings were held at the chapel on Princeton Street, which the Salem Church on Park Avenue graciously presented to St. Mark's. With the increase in membership the chapel became too small and the Black Rock Theatre and later the American Legion Hall on Brewster Street were used.

March 1951 land was purchased from the Bartram Estate and a church built on Midland Street. The first pastor of this church was Rev. Charles V. Bergstrom. He was followed in 1954 by Rev. Frank A. Anderson.

HISTORY OF ST. ANN'S PARISH



ST. ANN'S CHURCH — Brewster Street

Reverend Joseph F. Ford came to Black Rock in the spring of 1922 to establish the new church of St. Ann on the property purchased from Joseph Ciglar by Patrick H. FitzPatrick, in the name of the Most Reverend John J. Nilan, Bishop of Hartford.

Father Ford came to St. Ann's from St. Andrew's Church in Colchester, Connecticut. He laid immediate plans for the erection of a portable church to serve the needs of the people of Black Rock and the eastern section of the town of Fairfield. It is said that once the platform was laid, the people of St. Ann's parish under the direction of Father Ford, assembled the new portable church. The church was dedicated on May 14, 1922 by His Excellency Bishop Nilan. It is well remembered by the earlier parishioners both for its simple interior and the pot-bellied stove which was its sole means of heat.

Father Ford opened the portable church with a mission. Thus the parish life of St. Ann's began. The portable church soon proved too small, and plans for the erection of a basement to a new super-structure were made by Father Ford. The basement church of St. Ann's was dedicated on December 5, 1926. With the opening of the new church, the portable church moved to new surroundings to house the people of Holy Rosary Parish while their new church was under construction.

The basement church was planned well to serve the increased needs of the parish until the present church was built.

Father Ford founded parish societies to unite the people of his parish. He founded Our Lady's Guild, which later became the Altar Society; the Holy Name Society; and an organization known as the Joan of Arc Club, the first of three organizations in the history of St. Ann's parish for the young people. It was later succeeded by the Marquette Club, and more recently by the Father Ford Club.



ST. ANN'S SCHOOL — Ellsworth Street at Fairfield Avenue

In August, 1935, Father Ford purchased the old Bridgeport Orphan Asylum, located at Ellsworth Street and Fairfield Avenue, when this institution moved into new quarters at Woodfield. Plans for its conversion into a parochial school began immediately. On Wednesday, September 5, 1935, school opened with Mass. Classes One to Four assembled for the first day of school. The dedication of this new building was to have taken place on Saturday, September 8, with Monsignor John J. McGivney as speaker. The school represented the fond hopes of Father Ford, but it was not his happy privilege to see the school opened. He was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital on Sunday, September 2, and died on Friday, September 7, the day before his planned dedication ceremony. He was buried on the following Monday and the speaker for the dedication ceremony became the preacher for his funeral Mass.

The religious teaching of the children of the parish had started out in the hands of the lay people appointed to that work by Father Ford. Later he re-

ceived the services of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent's Hospital. With the opening of the school, four sisters arrived.

The second pastor of St. Ann's was Reverend Henry J. Coleman (deceased 1954). Father Coleman came to St. Ann's from St. Michael's Church in Beacon Falls, October 19, 1935.

The better to assist the school, Father Coleman established the Mothers' Club, an organization of the mothers of children in school. In May 1936, he organized the Children of Mary. The Boy Scouts, Troop 30, were organized by him in April 1936; the Cub Scouts, Pack 30, in 1943; and the Girl Scouts, in 1947.

St. Ann's School graduated its first class in June, 1940. The rapid growth of the school is well evidenced in the fact that five hundred twenty-five children are now enrolled at St. Ann's.

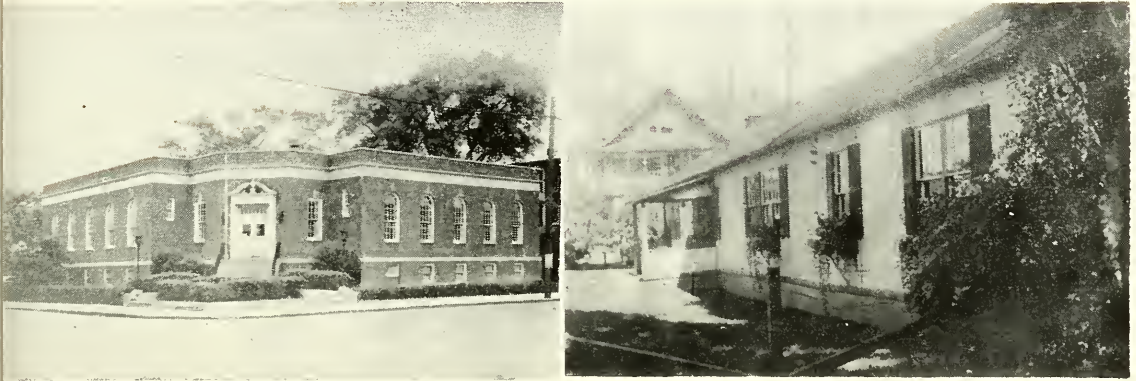
With the opening of St. Ann's School in 1935, a wing of the building served as a convent for the four nuns who later became eight and ten in number. The rapid development of both parish and the school caused Father Coleman to purchase a convent for the Sisters, in order that he might make use of the space occupied by them for classroom purposes. The present convent, located at 543 Ellsworth Street, was purchased from the Estate of Annie Gall. The Sisters of St. Ann's took occupancy on November 7, 1945.

Many are the memories connected with the basement church of St. Ann's. In it many of our parishioners were baptized, received their First Communion and Confirmation. Many, too, were married in this structure. For others it holds a lasting memory, because from it were buried members of their families. Now it serves as a parish hall, but for all it will stand as a monument to the parishioners who built it and to the pastors who were its shepherds—Father Ford, and Father Coleman, and the present pastor, Rev. Walter J. McCarthy.

The new church, designed in medieval Gothic style of the Parish Churches of England, was dedicated Sunday, April 20, 1952.



BLACK ROCK LIBRARY



The Black Rock Branch Library opened in a portable building at the corner of Fairfield and Melrose Ave., on July 1, 1922 with Miss Alice Durgy as branch librarian. Miss Durgy was followed by Miss Mildred Camp, who in turn was succeeded by Miss Virginia E. Hall, the present branch librarian. For nine years this portable building served the people of Black Rock as a branch library. In 1931 sufficient land was purchased from the Bridgeport Housing Co., at the same location, to accommodate a new library building.

Ground was broken for a much needed permanent building in August 1931. This building was completed in February 1932, at a cost of \$45,000 and opened to the public February 5, 1932. Mr. Leonard Asheim was the architect.

While waiting the completion of the new building, the library served the the public from the old Black Rock Bank building on Brewster St. The entire book collection was shelved there, but left no room for people to read in the building. The portable building that was used for nine years was sold to the Boy Scouts and was used as a recreation hall at Lake Pomperaug.

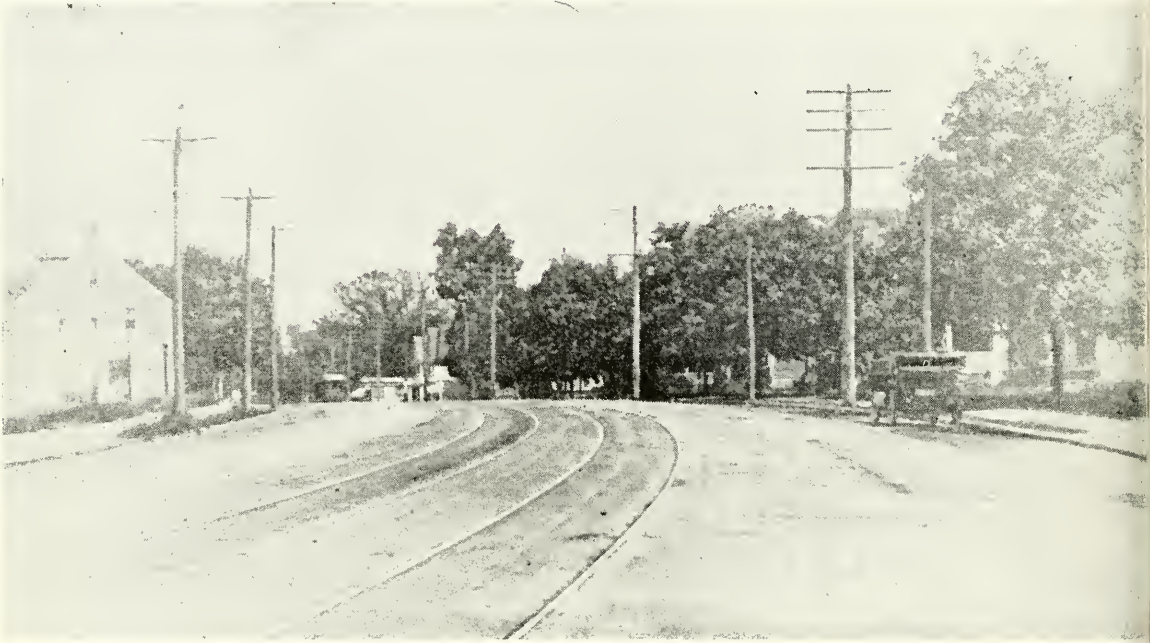


Miss Virginia E. Hall, present librarian. She has served since 1926.

The library gives service to the schools and to an active community. During this thirty two-year period 1922-1954 the library has furthered many activities such as story-hours, class work with schools, reading clubs, and scout instruction.

The users of the library increase and decrease in number according to the demand on time given to outside interests. The number of borrowers at this date is 2,178. The number of books in the branch at this date is 19,977. The circulation of books at this date is about 60,000 a year.

Do You Remember?



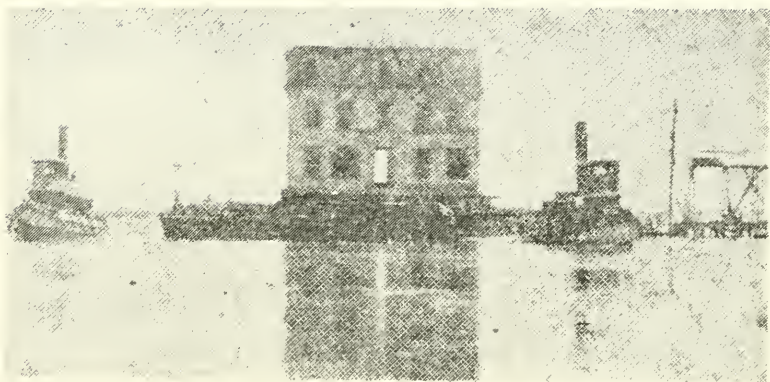
BLACK ROCK—1910—Fairfield Avenue, looking east at Bennett Street.

Photo by Thomas Colwell



BLACK ROCK—April 1, 1918—This is Fairfield Avenue, looking east, at Brewster Street. The building in the center of the picture is now located behind the Black Rock Bank, the present bank taking its place on the corner of Fairfield Avenue and Brewster Street. Army trucks line both sides of the street. They are Locomobiles, made in Bridgeport, and used in the first World War.

The Last Remains of the GEORGE HOTEL



These pictures and story were found in an old scrapbook of Miss Anna Hall, after the book had gone to press, so we were unable to include them with the Hotel George story on page 27.

The building is the last remains of the hotel, center section. It was moved across Black Rock harbor to its present location at Hancock Avenue, southwest corner of Spruce Street, about 1900. At that time Black Harbor extended to within a few hundred feet of this location. The area has now been filled in. For many years the bottom story was used by the Duka Pharmacy. Upper stories are apartments.

Black Rock Census — 1801

Captain Squire family	7	W. Wheeler family	3
The Burr family	2	Brewster family	7
Sillimans family	2	C. W. Brewster family	2
Gold family	4	Mrs. Bartram family	1
J. Bartram family	4	T. Bartram family	4
Sturges family	3	J. W. Wheeler family	6
Chancy family	2		
H. Osborn family	5		
J. Wheeler family	2		

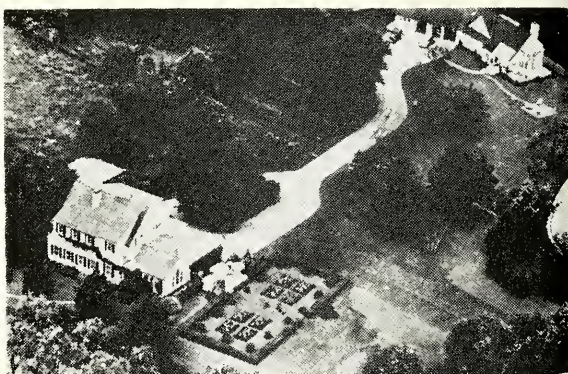
54
Also 6 stores, 5 wharves, 4 vessels.



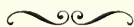
PICNICKING on Champ's Farm (in the vicinity of Quinlan Avenue and Midland Street. — The row of houses in background is on Seaside Avenue.



THE DUNDON HOUSE—built about 1908. It stood at 2295 Fairfield Avenue. House was purchased by the F. L. Mills Studebaker Co. in 1953 and moved to its new location on Hope Street.



THIS ESTATE on Anchorage Drive, fronting the Black Rock Harbor, is the site of the residence of the Lawrence Fenns and their children Joann, Mary-Lou and Susan. The previous owner was Mr. Canfield of the Canfield Rubber Company. The main house had been constructed by Mr. Archibald McNeil. The cottage was built and is now occupied by Mr. Joseph H. Cone, president of the Casco Products Corporation.



THE GARDEN APARTMENTS



BRIDGEPORT GARDEN APARTMENT CORP., built in 1917 as a government project by the U. S. Housing Corp. under the direction of Mr. William H. Ham. After World War I it was taken over by the Bridgeport Housing Co. (private corporation). In 1954 it was sold to the tenants, becoming a Co-op under the name of Bridgeport Garden Apartment Corp.

On this land originally stood the lavish estate of Mrs. Emma J. Richardson of Bridgeport and New York. It consisted of a large brick house, servant house, barns, stables, tennis courts, and beautifully landscaped gardens. After her death, in 1908, it passed to her niece, Mrs. Mary R. Washburn, whose daughter married A. R. Wood, a famous tennis player of that time. The estate was bought by the government from the Washburn family to make room for the project. The houses and barns were torn down. However, one house remains and is still standing on Nash Lane—next to the apartments. The Garden apartments have become very choice and sought after apartments due to their beautiful landscaping, great trees, and centrality.

Three of the original tenants still reside in the apartments. Dr. Beaudry, L. B. Walker, and Thomas Collins.

The two streets, Rowsley and Haddon, which were laid out by the Housing Corporation were named from the book "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall."

MODERN HOMES

IN BLACK ROCK



FRASSINELLI RESIDENCE - Eames Boulevard — This home was constructed in 1937 by the late Fred Frassinelli, one of the founders of the E & F Construction Company. Mrs. Frassinelli lives in the house.



STAPLETON RESIDENCE - Eames Boulevard. The house was built in 1949 by Sam Carp and recently sold to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Stapleton.



GEORGE NAMIAN RESIDENCE—9 Eames Boulevard. Built in 1950.



DAVID S. DRIER RESIDENCE—19 Eames Boulevard. Built in 1939.



ROGER BONVINI HOME—29 Eames Boulevard.



EMMET K. MOORE HOUSE—37 Eames Boulevard.



WHITTLES HOME — Sailor's Lane. The house was built in 1930 by Hastings. At present it is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Whittles. Mr. Whittles is Vice President of the Lucas Company.



ROBERT S. STEARNS HOUSE — 88 Grovers Avenue.



BURR RESIDENCE — Sailor's Lane. The house was built in 1930 by Hastings. At present it is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Burr. Mr. Burr is President of the Electric Maintenance Service Co. of Bennett Street, Black Rock.



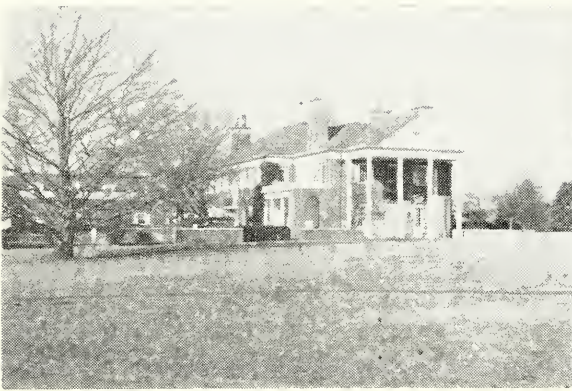
THE ANCHORAGE (view from Harbor)—98 Grovers Avenue. This Black Rock landmark was built by P. J. Bartram about 1900. It was later owned by Kenneth McNeil, Robert Hincks, H. B. Naramore, and E. Miller. Its present owner is Philip Whitney.



ARMITAGE RESIDENCE — Grovers Avenue. Residence of Mrs. Watson Armitage was built in 1916 by General Watson, father of Mrs. Armitage. The original house, lived in by the Watson family, was torn down. Photograph of the original house can be seen in another section of the book.



THE GILBERT L. KING HOUSE—1 Thorne Place. House was built by Sprague of Sprague Meter Company in 1930. After his death Mrs. Sprague married L. T. Mead. The house was then sold to Rusling. In 1946 the house became the residence of Gilbert King, a New York stockbroker, and son of John T., the late John T. King, one time political boss of Bridgeport.



THE CHIMNEYS — "The Chimneys", of Black Rock hill, was built in 1929 by Mrs. Dudley Mixer Morris at a cost of \$400,000. The house has twenty-one rooms. It was designed by the famous architect, Charles Wellington Walker. The house was completed just before the Wall Street crash and every detail imaginable was included in the plans of the house. Dudley Morris, his fortune swept away in the depression that followed the stock market boom, died before the family moved into "The Chimneys." Mrs. Morris and her daughter, Peggy, lived in the five-room servant quarters for several years. The lavishly decorated five master bedrooms, each with its own bath and fireplace, were little used. The huge six-car garage, with its own gas pump, has been empty for years. In 1942, it was used for a Coast Guard School, and for housing officers and men. In 1945, the house was sold to Joseph Caserta, a builder, for \$40,000; Mr. Caserta spent \$10,000 in remodeling the house.



WARNER RESIDENCE—Hilltop Road. The home of Mr. and Mrs. DeVer Warner, Vice President of the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company. The house was built about 1937. Recently sold to Arthur J. Quinn, president of Bridgeport Casting Company for \$58,000.



HOME OF MR. AND MRS. JOHN A. LYDDY. Mr. Lyddy is Superintendent of Police for the City of Bridgeport. The house was built in 1947 and is located on the highest point of the hill. It is on the site of the old fort that commanded a view of the harbor in the War of 1812.



LEWIS LUCAS HOME—Hilltop Road. Built in 1926 by Harold Naramore. In 1938 it became the residence of Lewis Lucas.



ARNOLD BORGMAN RESIDENCE — Hilltop Road



1951—AERIAL VIEW of Ash Creek, looking west towards Fairfield. Note Fairfield Avenue in the center of the photograph.



BLACK ROCK looking east. Mack Truck Garage is in the foreground. Fairfield Avenue on the right. Frouge-Beverly Theatre Building—upper right. Center top shows Black Rock School.



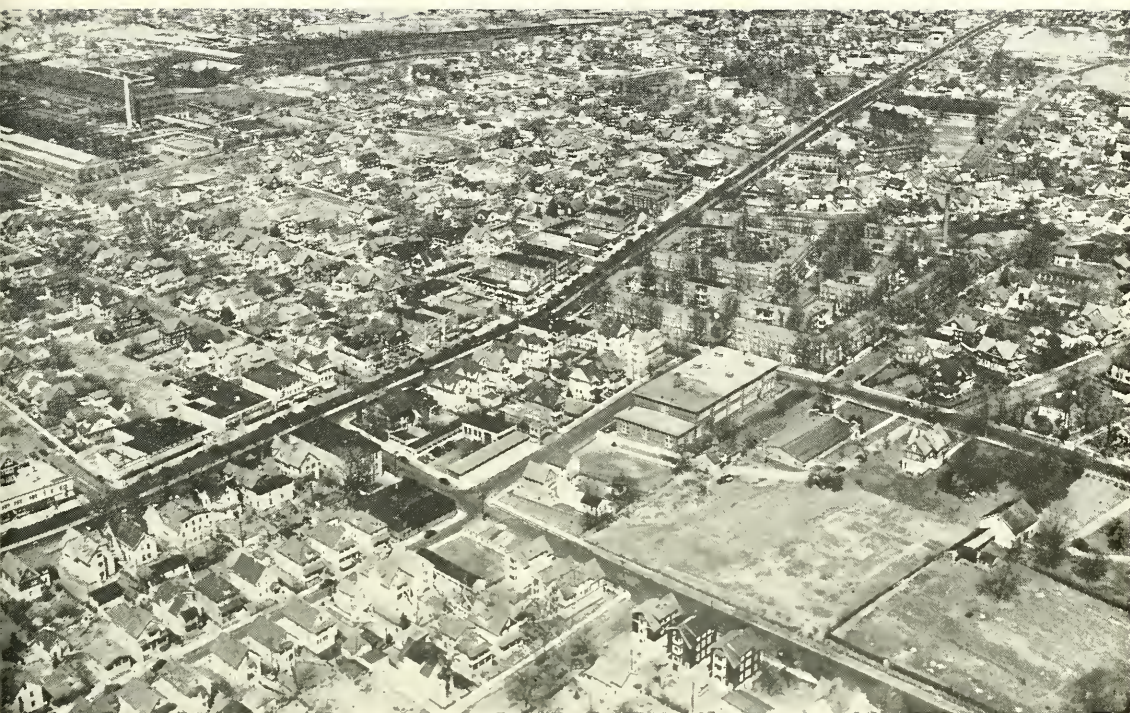
HOUSE on Fairfield Avenue where the present Mary Journey's Inn now stands.

It was built in 1865 by Robert Moran, a wealthy farmer, who farmed all the land from Davidson Street to Ash Creek Bridge. The house passed to his daughter, Alice Moran, who sold it to Mr. Down — who had two daughters, Alice and Elizabeth.

It became the GOLDEN INN, famous for its pastries and delicious food. In 1922 it was sold to Mrs. Mary Casillo, who operated it under the name of GREEN LANE INN until 1925, when it burned to the ground.



AERIAL VIEW of the Bullard Machine Co. and the Rooster River . . . as it appeared in the early twenties. Now the bridge has been replaced, also the foundry running along Brewster Street extends to Canfield Avenue, it being built over the river. Many other changes can be noted.



1949—AERIAL VIEW OF BLACK ROCK—Fairfield Avenue running diagonally across photo. Bullard's is at left. Black Rock school and Garden Apartments are in the middle right of the photograph. Note area on lower right prior to the building of the new churches—St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church and St. Mark's Lutheran Church.



1952—ST. MARY'S BOULEVARD and Black Rock's exclusive residential area.



1949—BLACK ROCK HARBOR at low tide. Note remains of old piers. Foreground pier is the remains of George Hotel pier—prior to that it was part of Squire's Wharf.



1951—AERIAL VIEW OF BLACK ROCK, looking west. In the foreground is Bullard's. Note Ash Creek as it divides Black Rock from Fairfield.

Along Fairfield Avenue in 1955



Entering BLACK ROCK from Fairfield.



PACANOW STREET, looking East. Mary Journey's Inn can be seen on the left.

ALONG FAIRFIELD AVENUE



POLAND STREET, looking East. Conspicuously on the left is Mack Motors. Right foreground shows Ray Arnold Company.



Looking West. COURTLAND AVENUE on the left and DAVIDSON STREET on the right. The Ritz Ballroom is in left background.

BLACK ROCK IN THE YEAR 1955



MOREHOUSE STREET, looking West. At extreme right can be seen the office of Antoniak Printing Service, publishers of this book.



GILMAN STREET, looking West. Black Rock's largest office building . . . the Frouge-Beverly block is pictured. Note large tree . . . as it is a traffic hazard, its removal has been on the agenda of the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club for many years.

ALONG FAIRFIELD AVENUE



BENNETT STREET, looking West to Fox Street. This group of stores is known as the Duhigg block.



BLACK ROCK IN THE YEAR 1955



Opposite WILSON STREET, looking East.



View towards BREWSTER STREET. On the left can be seen the Black Rock Bank and Trust Co., where many of the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club meetings are held.

ALONG FAIRFIELD AVENUE



Up the Avenue we go! On the left is ALFRED STREET, on the right are the Garden Apartments.



Near PRINCETON STREET are located the Fire Engine Co. No. 11 and the 3rd Precinct of the Police Department.

BLACK ROCK IN THE YEAR 1955



ELLSWORTH STREET, on the right is St. Ann's School, which was formerly the old Bridgeport Orphan Asylum.



On the way to Bridgeport, looking East, the Automotive Twins, can be seen on the right.

ALONG FAIRFIELD AVENUE



Along Fairfield Avenue, near WALDORF AVENUE. F. L. Mills Company on the left.

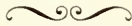


WHITTIER STREET, looking East. Automobile row now occupies most of the land which was the former Circus grounds.

BLACK ROCK IN THE YEAR 1955



Heading towards downtown Bridgeport. The VIADUCT, scene of the Great Train Wreck, story on Page 104, is in the background. It is expected that this area will change with the coming of the new super highway.



BLACK ROCK CIVIC AND BUSINESS MEN'S CLUB, INC.

— PAST PRESIDENTS —

1928-1929 Harold C. Main	1943 Charles S. Brody
1930 Oscar B. Bertilson	1943 John Zotack *
1931 Claude B. Moshier	1944 Carl P. Finney
1932 Charles H. White	1945 Thomas Mortell
1933 Ray S. Arnold	1946 Gunnard Wellner
1934 Milton D. Blanck	1947 Paul Goldbecker
1935 John Dobey, Jr.	1948 William W. Lewis *
1936 Hobart L. Smith	1949 Gabriel Biro
1937 Louis J. Standish	1950 Robert H. Walker
1938 W. A. Kimmerlin *	1951 Edgar Freese
1939 Louis T. Dobey	1951 Stephen Homa
1940 Edgar F. Webster	1951 V. W. Clabby
1941 Geza M. Horvath	1952 Harry W. Streck
1942 Richard F. Moore	1953 Frank J. Clark
1942 Jasper F. Mathews	

* Deceased

IT ALL STARTED IN THE YEAR 1927

Reminiscing — Harold C. Main

Twenty eight years is a long time. It is rather difficult to remember in detail everything that happened at that time. As far as possible, however, I shall try to set down here the facts regarding the birth and infancy of the Black Rock Business Men's Club, now the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club.

On December 27, 1927, a meeting was held at Champ's Farm, then located about where Louis Dobey lives on Quinlan Avenue, and attended by fifteen business men and property owners. Those present were Oscar B. Bertilson, George P. Weising, George H. Platt, Frank J. Green, Fred L. McEnany, Arthur Gustafson, Edward M. Brennan, the Rev. C. S. McDowell, Joseph R. Barry, George McCormack, Fred A. Lyon, Claire DeWolfe, Barton F. Champion, Abe Friedman and Harold C. Main. It was decided that night to organize, and a committee was appointed to draw up by-laws.



HAROLD C. MAIN

*First President
and Organizer*

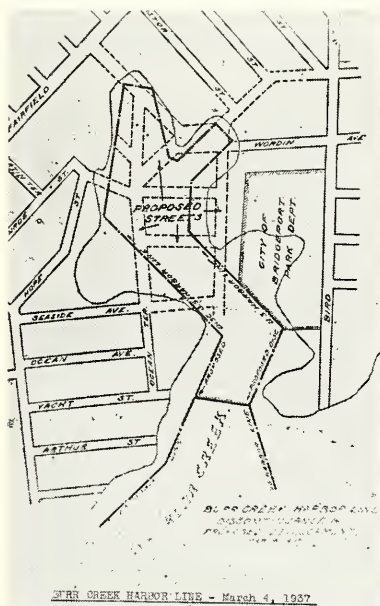
The second meeting was held on January 11, 1928 at which time the organization was completed and the following officers elected: President, Harold C. Main; Vice President, Fred H. Merwin; Secretary, Raymond S. Arnold; Treasurer, Oscar B. Bertilson; "Blackie", Joseph R. Barry; "Rocky", George McCormack; Directors: Fred A. Lyon, George Weising, Abraham Friedman, Harry H. Miller, Louis J. Spalla and J. S. Gilbert.

This was not the first business men's organization to be formed in Bridgeport. Some time previously a group known as the Bridgeport Business Men's Association was organized but did not last very long. However, as soon as our group was formed, interest revived among business men in various parts of the city and similar groups were formed in the west side, east end, east side, north end and down town. The unusual feature is that the only one that has remained active throughout these twenty eight years is the Black Rock group. Some of the other organizations have disappeared. Others became inactive and were reorganized later. Now the question naturally arises—what was the secret of our success? I think there were two important factors in which our club differed from the organizations in other sections of the city. Most of them were organized for purely selfish purposes. Some were simply based on "I'll

trade with you and you trade with me" basis. Some were just protesting groups which were continually complaining about high taxes, high electric light and water rates and similar items. The Black Rock Business Men's Club stated at the outset that it was devoted to the general improvement of the Black Rock section and would be devoted to making Black Rock a better place in which to live. When new members were admitted in those early years, they were always informed that their membership was solicited only with the understanding that they were willing to give of their time and effort to developing the community with no thought of personal gain or reward. I think this constant ideal of community betterment was a dominating motive and was primarily responsible for the success of our organization.



Second Year Officers of the Black Rock Business Men's Club, January 1928—Front row, seated, left to right, Mr. Jepson, Harold C. Main, Abe Friedman. Second row, standing, left to right, Fred Lyon, Claude Moshier, James Griglum, Howard Bodurtha, Ray Arnold, Oscar Bertilson.



AERIAL VIEW OF BURR CREEK 1937

The ultimate success of an organization, however high its aims, can only be accomplished through the untiring efforts of its leaders. No sketch such as this would be complete if we did not pay tribute to some of the men who devoted so much of their time and energy to this organization and to the community. Outstanding in those early days were John Dobey, Jr. who for many years headed the Civic Committee; Attorney Charles S. Brody, who handled all the legal work in connection with the club without ever presenting a bill; Joe Barry and the late George McCormack who provided us with much entertainment, the late Howard Bodurtha who was secretary for many years and Claude B. Moshier who headed the great Mardi Gras in 1930, one of the outstanding events in the history of Black Rock. Brewster Street, between Fairfield Avenue and the Bullard plant was set aside for a block party, Mardi Gras and reviewing stand. The Harvey Hubbell band furnished the music for dancing. A colossal parade was held starting at Fairfield and Railroad Avenues — proceeding out Fairfield Avenue to Grasmere and returning to Brewster Street. The parade was led by Alderman Irving H. Johnson astride a white horse, as grand marshal of parade and there were many decorated floats and costumes of pictorial color, showing the history of the old settlement of Black Rock, its seafaring element, its practical adventure and early ship building days. After the parade, there was dancing in the streets under flood lights, a king and queen were chosen, and a reception was held for them at the Ritz



13 — THE BOYS TRY THEIR SKILL IN BOWLING — Front row, left to right: Chester Zambardo, Louis Sidish. Second row, left to right: Louis Dobey, Alex Vago, Ed Dorne, George Namian, Captain, Harold Main, Ed Frankel, Ed Curtis. Third row, left to right: Mike Kavalich, Claude Moshier, E. C. J. Kelly, Steve Toth, Nat Gert, John Pastor. Back row, left to right: D. P. Lynch, Steve Baye, Al McTaggart, Paul Bonney, Bill Kimmerlin, Ebie Smith, Marius Thane.

Ballroom. Others who were active in those years were Oscar B. Bertilson, Ray S. Arnold, Milton D. Blanck, Hobart L. Smith, Louis T. Dobey, Geza Horvath, Richard F. Moore and Jasper S. Mathews.

Burr Creek project was the Club's largest undertaking. This involved the presentation of the Burr Creek Bill to Congress, which passed the House and Senate and signed by the late President Roosevelt, thus eliminating the Creek



Presentation of BURR CREEK BILL at Algonquin Club, Bridgeport, Conn., February 21, 1938.
Hon. Wm. Citron, John Dobey, Jr., Charles S. Brody, Harold C. Main, Wm. Kimmerlin

as a navigable stream. It took several years of work by the club members to get the property owners, whose land bordered on the creek, to waive their riparian rights. The filling started in 1939 and to date some 200 acres have been filled. Two government housing projects have been built in the area. John Dobey, Jr., served as chairman. It is the hope that some day this area will become a park for the people of Black Rock.

In this sketch of the early days I have not attempted to recite the many accomplishments of our club. Those who lived or worked in Black Rock in the early twenties can remember the noxious odors from the creek which at that time came right up to Fairfield Avenue. The dangers of this same street at that time, a portion of U. S. Route No. 1, with no adequate lighting or other safeguards, the disgraceful conditions at the Fairfield entrance to Black

Rock with an open dump at both sides of the bridge and the mud on Brewster Street through which our children had to trudge to attend church or school. The elimination of these hazards and the improvements of such conditions were among the early aims of the club and were brought to fruition. There is no doubt in my mind that this organization will continue to be a dominant factor in the growth and development of Black Rock and we who had a part in its organization and accomplishments feel amply repaid for our efforts.



IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 6, 1937

Mr. CITRON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To declare Burr Creek, from Fairfield Avenue southward to Yacht Street in the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a non-navigable stream.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That Burr Creek, at and southward from Fairfield Avenue
4 to Yacht Street in the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, be,
5 and the same is hereby, declared to be not a navigable
6 water of the United States within the meaning of the Con-
7 stitution and laws of the United States.

8 SEC. 2. That any project heretofore authorized by any
9 Act of Congress, insofar as such project relates to said Burr
10 Creek from Fairfield Avenue southward to Yacht Street in
11 the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, be, and the same is
12 hereby, abandoned.

13 SEC. 3. The right to alter, amend, or repeal this Act
14 is hereby expressly reserved.

PUBLIC—NO. 276—75TH CONGRESS

CHAPTER 607—1ST SESSION

(H. R. 7766)

AN ACT

To declare Burr Creek, from Fairfield Avenue southward to Yacht Street in the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a nonnavigable stream.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That that portion of Burr Creek in the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, lying north of a line across the creek beginning at the point of intersection of the south side of Yacht Street extended and the west harbor line of the harbor lines established by the Secretary of War December 9, 1924, thence south eighty-five degrees forty-six minutes seventeen seconds east to the east harbor line of said creek, be, and the same is hereby, declared to be not a navigable water of the United States within the meaning of the Constitution and laws of the United States.

SEC. 2. That any project heretofore authorized by any Act of Congress, insofar as such project relates to the above described portion of Burr Creek in the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, be, and the same is hereby, abandoned.

SEC. 3. The right to alter, amend, or repeal this Act is hereby expressly reserved.

Approved, August 12, 1937.





AERIAL VIEW OF BURR CREEK 1950 — Note two housing projects in foreground on filled-in mudflat.

THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS

It was back in February 18, 1938, at the Black Rock Theatre, that the club presented one of its minstrel shows. "Vas you dere Sharlie?"

Interlocutor, Barrister Charles S. Brody. *End Men*, Eddie Leonard Bergers, Eddie Cantor Dorne, First Broom Moshier, Lou Dockstader Smith, Eddie Primrose Johnson, Second Broom Clabby.

Gentlemen of the Ensemble, Fred McEnany, Richard Moore, Harold Main, Albert Schuman, Albert Reich, Morris Thane, Henry Renaud, Joseph Barry, John Dobey, Jr., Alex Vago, Louis Dobey, Nathaniel Gilbert, Raymond Gilbert and Louis Standish.

The entire production was under the personal direction of Florenz Ziegfeld (Moshier). Musical Director, David Rubinoff (Clabby). Costumes were by the Johnson Body Co., with Prof. William Lampman at the Steinway. Stage Manager, O. Berger Bertilson, and Stage Settings by Bridgeport Boiler Works. Lighting effects by the United Illuminating Co. Music was played without the special permission of the copyright owners.

Specialty numbers were sung by the following: Joseph Barry, Edward Bergers, Fred McEnany, Hobart Smith, Henry Renaud Edmund Dorne Richard Moore, Albert Reich, Irving Johnson, Vincent Clabby and Claude Moshier.

The Committee for the event included: Vincent Clabby, Joseph Barry, Claude Moshier, William Kimmerlin, Hobart Smith and John Dobey.

DUMP CAMPAIGN BACKED BY CLUB

State Health Aid confers with City Officials in Response to Complaints

On November 4, 1954, developments in the Wordin Avenue dump controversy* included acceptance by the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club of a resolution commending the action by City Court Prosecutor, Max Frauworth, the arrival of a State Health Department aid for a conference with Mayor Jasper McLevy and the continuance of the cases of six men arrested for violation of the dump ordinances. (A State health regulation ordered the closing of dumping grounds where materials are not disposed of — either burned or plowed under.)

George F. Antoniak, president, backed by the officers and directors of the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club, called for a special session of the organization and presented the following resolution to Mayor Jasper McLevy.

"WHEREAS the Officers and Directors, being aware of the objectionable dumping and burning of all types of refuse and rubbish contrary to present City Ordinances, and the menace to health and property particularly in Black Rock Village, the West End and the Black Rock sections of the City of Bridgeport, we, the entire body of Officers and Directors here present, hereby resolve that whereas the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club, Inc., in order to better promote and safeguard the interests of health and property values of the entire West End and Black Rock sections, do hereby go on record as having voted unanimously to commend the efforts of City Prosecutor Max Frauworth in enforcing the City Ordinance forbidding the promiscuous dumping of all types of refuse, papers and combustible materials at said dump.

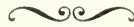
"FURTHER RESOLVED, that he should order the arrest of any persons violating the said City Ordinance against said dumping. Further, that immediate consideration should be given by the City to the construction of an incinerator to replace said dump."

An "all quiet" interlude on the "battle of the dump" front prevailed as both Mayor Jasper McLevy and City Prosecutor Max Frauworth awaited development before taking further action. Then on November 13, 1954, Mayor McLevy indicated he had accepted defeat in the explosive Wordin Avenue

* For many years the Wordin Avenue dump was on the club's agenda—the constant fires created a smoke condition in Black Rock and West End, and the health hazard resultant from the debris was a cause of great concern.

dump fire issue. His defeat marked the culmination of days at City Court, with a parade of witnesses testifying on the dump issue. Representing the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club at Court were Joseph A. Caserta, Civic chairman; George F. Antoniak, president, and directors Frank J. Clark and Dr. Ivan Justinus. Mayor McLevy announced that he would ask the Legislature to approve a bond issue to build an incinerator in Bridgeport's smoke choked West End and Black Rock.

The plan was revealed in a letter from Warren Scott, chief sanitation engineer for Connecticut who wrote: "We feel that the handling of the municipal refuse is the duty of the City of Bridgeport, and the city officials have advised that they are taking, and will take steps to control the operation of the dump, and are going forward in the near future with plans for constructing an incinerator."



A Proposal — Tidal dam and road would join St. Mary's, Black Rock with Jennings Beach, Fairfield, creating an inland pond safe for swimming and smallboating.

BOUNDARY LINE SET BY CITY AND FAIRFIELD

Bridgeport and Fairfield municipal officials agreed to set up a line in the center of Ash Creek, from the Post Road bridge to the Sound, as the town boundary in that area.

Municipal engineers of both communities were directed to map such a line and submit it soon for confirmation by a joint committee of city and town officials.

Then the proposed boundary will be presented by the committee to the Bridgeport Common Council and the Fairfield Representative Town meeting for final adoption.

In discussing the matter, the officials pointed out that settlement of a boundary, which has been in question for 20 years or more, is a prerequisite for any joint action toward improving the Ash Creek area, possibly for a yacht basin and bathing beaches.

This has long been the dream of the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club and a proposal of this project is shown on the preceding page.



BOYS' CLUB NEEDED IN BLACK ROCK

In April of 1955, the organization went on record as being in favor of establishing a Boys' Club in the Black Rock area. The officers and directors met with Mr. William Montgomery, regional director, Boys' Clubs of America and Mr. Herbert Hart, executive director of Bridgeport Boys' Club, to explore the possibility of locating a branch to provide boys and girls with recreational facilities similar to other clubs in the city.

In order to promote interest in the plan an essay contest is to be conducted for boys on the subject, "Why Black Rock Needs a Boys' Club."

The Boys' Club idea received considerable attention during a general meeting of the organization and residents of the area at St. Ann's Parish Hall, on April 12. It was decided to form a group that would formulate plans to further this great need and Mr. Frank J. Clark was named as chairman of this project.

BLACK ROCK CIVIC AND BUSINESS MEN'S CLUB, INC.

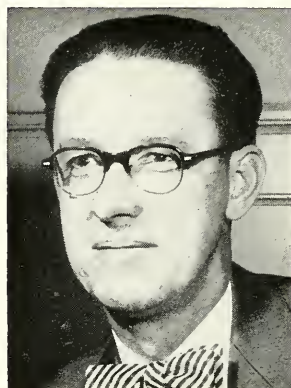
OFFICERS — 1954



George F. Antoniak
President



Joseph Banyas
Vice President



Roy Watkins
Treasurer



Zoltan Sabo
Financial Secretary



The Club is composed of men in the community, all leaders in their own field, giving of their valuable time to serve civic interests in Black Rock. After twenty-eight years of continuous service to Black Rock, the Club has constantly grown. The men who have worked so diligently have also gained much in experience and understanding of civic problems, religious and racial relations, housing, city planning and administration. The wealth of information that each has gained in meetings and informal discussions, has helped to make the strong bond that makes this civic club an organization to be proud of.



G. Webster Miller
Recording Secretary



Joseph R. Barry
"Blacky"



Bernard J. Russell
"Rocky"

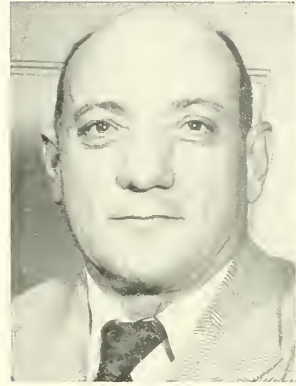
DIRECTORS — 1954



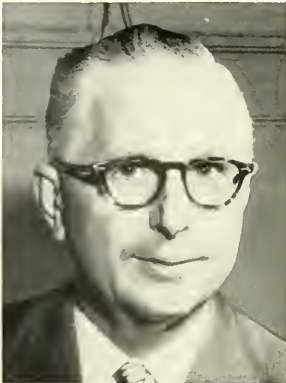
Frank J. Clark



Dr. Ivan Justinus



Joseph A. Caserta



Barnabas P. Toth



Gabriel Biro



Edgar Freese



Dr. Harry Resnik



Paul Belles



Harry W. Streck

BLACK ROCK CIVIC AND BUSINESS MEN'S CLUB, INC.

MEMBERS — 1955

- Antell, Dr. Jerome, *Optometrist*
 Antoniak, George F., *Printer*
 Applebaum, Morris, *Variety Store Merchant*
 Arnold, Raymond S., *Industrial Equipment*
 Baduini, Emil, *Auto Accessories Merchant*
 Banker, Walter, *Attorney*
 Bansak, Raymond, *Banker*
 Banyas, Joseph F., *Meats and Groceries*
 Barry, Joseph, *Ritz Ballroom*
 Belles, Paul G., *Alderman*
 Bertilson, Oscar B., *Plumber*
 Biro, Gabriel, *Banker*
 Blackman, Sidney, *Jeweler*
 Blanck, Milton D., *Public Relations*
 Blank, Dr. Henry, *Dentist*
 Bodie, Stephen P., *Banker*
 Brody, Charles S., *Attorney*
 Brody, Lawrence, *Attorney*
 Brothers, Albert T., *Auto Dealer*
 Brown, Morris, *Interior Decorator*
 Brown, Sidney F., *Auto Dealer*
 Burkstrom, Edward L., *Painter*
 Burr, Walter N., *Electrical Maintenance*
 Campo, John, Jr., *Grain Dealer*
 Cappiello, Patsy, *Restaurant*
 Caserta, Joseph A., *Realtor*
 Choquette, Peter, *Realtor*
 Church, Charles W., *C. P. A.*
 Clabby, Vincent W., *Salesman*
 Clark, Frank J., *Banker*
 Cohan, Dr. S. Howard, *Dentist*
 Colonari, Raymond, *Public Relations*
 Crapanzano, Dr. Mark M., *Dentist*
 Creel, John, *New Car Dealer*
 Csonotos, Stephen, *Auto Repairing*
 Csonotos, William, *Auto Repairing*
 Dearborn, Lew, *Realtor*
 Demas, Nicholas, *Restaurant*
 Denter, Charles W., *Restaurant*
 Deri, Joseph, *Auto Body Repairs*
 DeSanti, Clement F., *Tires*
 Dobey, John, Jr., *Appliances*
 Dobey, Louis T., *Auto Parts*
 Doebeli, Charles A., *Florist*
 Dragone, Carmine, *Used Car Dealer*
 Dragone, Joseph, *Used Car Dealer*
 Dragone, Patsy, *Used Car Dealer*
 Dragone, Peter, *Used Car Dealer*
 Duffy, Harry E., *Insurance*
 Duhigg, Edward C., *Realtor*
 Eisenman, Richard D., *Banker*
 Erhardt, Gustave R., *Scrap Metal Dealer*
 Factor, Benjamin, *Office Equipment*
 Fekete, Alexander J., *Package Store*
 Folbaum, Jacob, *Package Store*
 Franz, Charles, Jr., *Banker*
 Freese, Edgar H., *Banker*
 Gale, James E., *Real Estate*
 George, Francis, *Manufacturer*
 Gevurtz, Harold, *Tailor*
 Goldbecker, Paul J., *Optician*
 Gruber, William J., *Auto Dealer*
 Gustavson, Carl A., *Retired Policeman*
 Herskowitz, Louis, *Restaurant*
 Hofmiller, Harold P., *Paper Salesman*
 Holzer, Abraham, *Auto Dealer*
 Homa, Stephen, *Restaurant*
 Horvath, Geza M., Jr., *Manufacturer*
 Hrivnock, Theodore H., *Lumber Dealer*
 Hubler, Julius A., *Plumber*
 Hultgren, Eric G., *Manufacturer*
 Iodice, Michael, *Service Station*
 Jackson, Edward M., *Accountant*
 Jacob, Dr. Anton, *Dentist*
 Jenner, Arthur, *Engineer, Retired*
 Johnson, Ivar, *Contractor*
 Mary Journey's Inn, *Catering*
 Justinus, Dr. Ivan O.
 Katz, Maurice, *Insurance Agent*
 Kaye, Louis, *Used Car Dealer*
 Kelly, Eugene, *Internal Revenue Dept.*
 Kinnie, Dimill L., *First Selectman, Fairfield*
 Kot, Joseph, *Hardware*
 Kovacs, John S., *Contractor*
 Kovacs, William B., *Meat Market*
 Lako, Steve B., Jr., *Auto Accessories*
 Lange, Paul H., *Engineer*
 Lattin, Thomas E., *Banker*
 Lesko, John T., *Mortician*
 Lucas, Frank, *Restaurant*
 Lyddy, John A., *Police Superintendent*

BLACK ROCK CIVIC AND BUSINESS MEN'S CLUB, INC.

MEMBERS — 1955

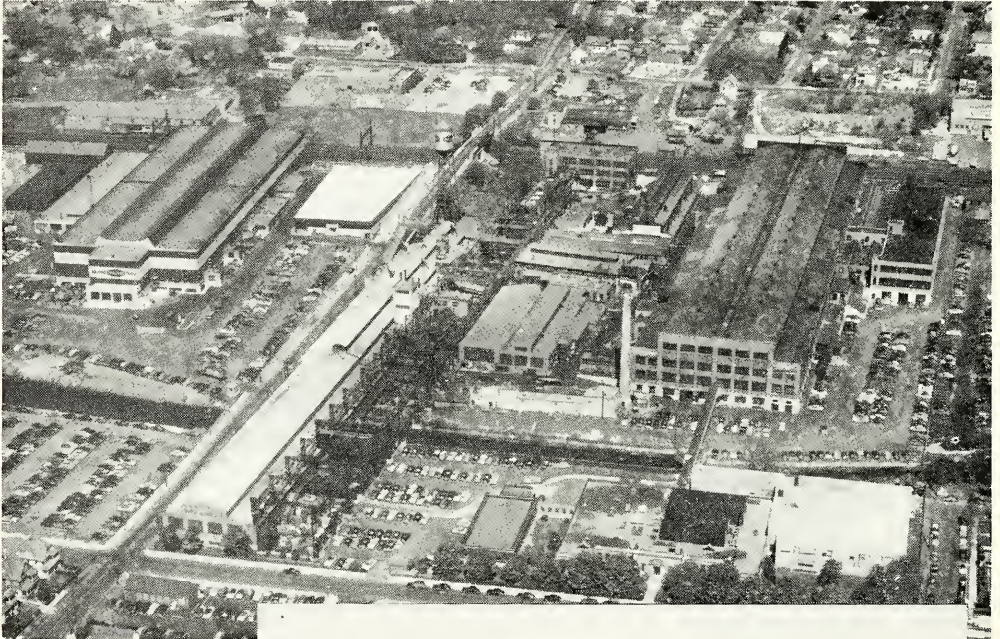
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- | | |
|--|--|
| Main, Harold C., <i>Banker</i> | Sabo, Zoltan, <i>Meats and Groceries</i> |
| Maraczi, Bela, <i>Restaurant</i> | Shaeffer, Samuel F., <i>Department Store</i> |
| March, Arthur A., <i>Attorney</i> | Sharnick, Ambrose, <i>Service Station</i> |
| Martin, William, <i>Service Station</i> | Shook, Edwin O., <i>Accountant</i> |
| Mathews, Jasper S., <i>Office Supplies</i> | Smith, Hobart L., <i>Auto Dealer</i> |
| Matto, Augustus, <i>Ignition Service</i> | Smith, Joseph G., <i>Manager</i> |
| McLennan, William J., <i>Plant Protector</i> | Smith, William H., <i>Bowling Alleys</i> |
| McLevy, Jasper, <i>Mayor</i> | Sovary, Stephen A., <i>Meats and Groceries</i> |
| Meltzer, Dr. Saul B., <i>Surgeon</i> | Spalla, Louis J., <i>Barber</i> |
| Miller, G. Webster, <i>Banker</i> | Staines, Robert, <i>Package Store</i> |
| Miller, Roland V. G., <i>Auto Body Repairs</i> | Standish, Louis J., <i>Manufacturer</i> |
| Mizak, Andrew F., Jr., <i>Farm Equipment</i> | Storey, Wilfred G., <i>Dry Cleaning</i> |
| Moody, Fred L., <i>Grocery Store Manager</i> | Streck, Harry W., <i>Accountant</i> |
| Moore, Richard F., <i>Manufacturer</i> | Swanson, Sigurd B., <i>Manufacturer</i> |
| Mortell, Thomas, <i>Beverages</i> | |
| Moshier, Claude B., <i>Restaurant</i> | Toth, Barnabas, <i>Realtor</i> |
| | Totoro, Albert M., <i>Banker</i> |
| Nagy, Julius J., <i>Tavern</i> | Turetsky, Dr. Samuel, <i>Physician</i> |
| Naramore, Robert W., <i>Manufacturer</i> | |
| Navay, Dr. Aladar E., <i>Dentist</i> | Varga, Louis L., <i>Soft Drinks</i> |
| North, Arthur E., <i>Bullard's</i> | Vasil, Peter, <i>Meats and Groceries</i> |
| | Vissar, Nicholas E., <i>Grocer</i> |
| Panish, Erwin J., <i>Manufacturer</i> | |
| Paxton, William M., III, <i>Manager</i> | Wahlquist, E. Hadar, <i>Engineer</i> |
| Pekar, Joseph R., <i>Banker</i> | Walker, Robert H., <i>Brake Service</i> |
| Polke, Frank M., <i>Mortician</i> | Wallin, Frank R., <i>Machine Shop</i> |
| Pollock, Herman, <i>Investments</i> | Walter, Claymond, <i>Pharmacist</i> |
| | Watkins, Roy E., <i>Banker</i> |
| Reed, Carl R., <i>Banker</i> | Wellner, Gunnard F., <i>Insurance</i> |
| Resnik, Dr. Harry | Westberg, Herbert W., <i>Manufacturer</i> |
| Rosenbaum, Joseph M., <i>Hardware</i> | Williams, Kaye, <i>Marine Supplies</i> |
| Russell, Bernard J., <i>Insurance</i> | |
| | Zwecker, Harry, <i>Florist</i> |



WE'VE GROWN TOGETHER . . .

Since 1915 The Bullard Company has been a resident in Black Rock and has played a major role in the industrial and economic development of the area.



Present Bullard Plant



First Bullard Plant in Black Rock

Today the plant, sprawled over 52 acres, has 814,444 square feet of floor space with an additional 213,000 square feet under construction. So as the community, Black Rock, continues to grow—*so does the company.*

THE BULLARD COMPANY
286 CANFIELD AVENUE
BRIDGEPORT 2, CONNECTICUT

24 Hours a Day

. Since 1909



Three generations of our family have faithfully answered the needs of thousands of families during the last 46 years.

We pledge to continue our service, which to us means placing in action all our highest ideals.



JOHN LESKO

1909-1933

WILLIAM J. LESKO

1913-1926

JOHN S. LESKO

1909-

JOHN T. LESKO

1935-

JOHN S. LESKO and SON, INC.

FUNERAL HOME

1390 FAIRFIELD AVENUE

BRIDGEPORT

★

SYMBOLIZING THE RICH PAST of the entire State of Connecticut is this book on the Black Rock area. As the "Arsenal of the Nation," the Constitution State turned out firearms and ammunition in the early days when America struggled to maintain its hard-won independence. Later, this skill was converted into an ability to manufacture precision instruments and machines.

Today, when America again faces a serious threat to its freedom, Connecticut industry is still playing a major role in our national defense. Moore is proud to be one of the many Connecticut machine tool builders contributing to the industrial might of America.



MOORE SPECIAL TOOL COMPANY, INC.
BRIDGEPORT 7, CONNECTICUT

Black Rock Bank's Famous Mural



OLD BLACK ROCK HARBOR ABOUT 1810

Organized in 1926 with an outstanding board of directors, managed by competent officers and staffed by a friendly group of tellers and clerks, this bank has achieved an enviable reputation that extends far beyond the bounds of Black Rock.

Now in 1955, in order to better serve the surrounding territory, we are opening a branch office at Black Rock Turnpike and Stillson Road in Fairfield.

THE BLACK ROCK BANK AND TRUST COMPANY

FAIRFIELD AVENUE COR. BREWSTER STREET
BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

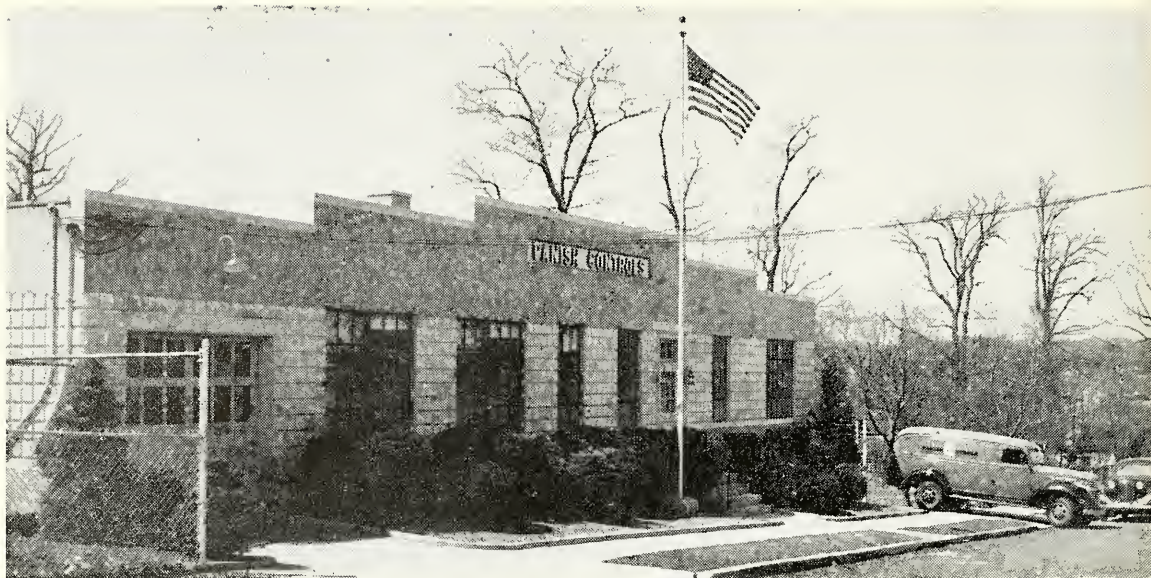
BLACK ROCK TURNPIKE COR. STILLSON ROAD
FAIRFIELD, CONN.

MEMBER
FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORP.



MEMBER
FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Capital, Surplus and Profits over \$1,300,000 — Resources over \$12,000,000



PANISH CONTROLS

The technological development and the resulting high standard of living in the United States of America is due in great measure to the genius of many inventors and the enterprising spirit of our capitalistic system.

Mr. Erwin J. Panish has been a resident of the Black Rock Section of Bridgeport since 1915. While working in various engineering capacities in some of our local plants, he used whatever spare time he had — mostly nights — to develop certain inventions. The process was extremely slow and often discouraging. Nevertheless, he never gave up, and finally in 1939 was able to submit to our Naval authorities a new Control System which was — and still is — far ahead of anything in its field.

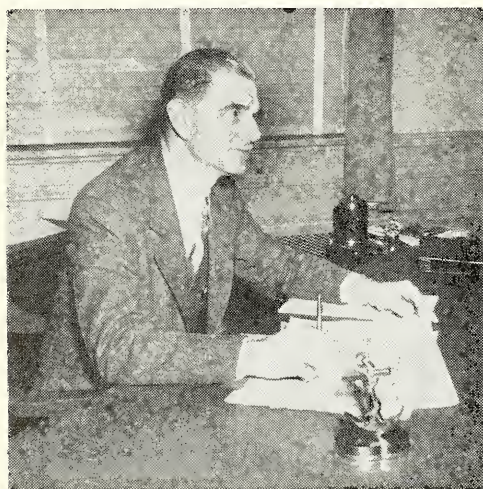
Little did he realize that the successful conclusion of these full scale experiments would lead to the immediate acceptance of his Control System by all our Armed Forces. In fact, the demand became so pressing that in 1940 he was forced to use all his financial and technical resources to open up a manufacturing plant for the production of this equipment.

The success of Panish Controls has by now become one of Black Rock's historical facts.

During World War II, Panish Controls received a total of five Army-Navy "E" Awards and in 1945 earned the coveted Naval Ordnance Development Award.

Likewise these controls immediately found a waiting market in the commercial fields here and abroad.

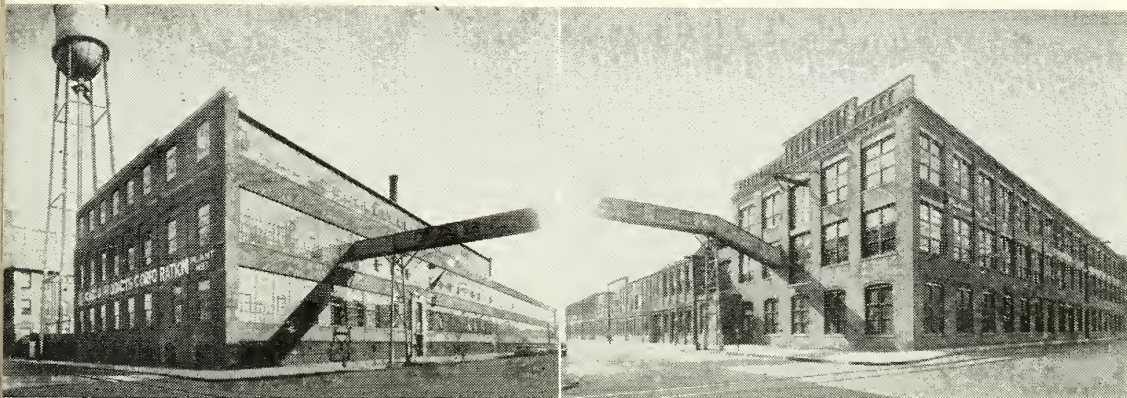
The company carefully avoided over-expansion and the relatively small plant, located on Bennett Street, has the distinction of being one of the cleanest, most modern manufacturing plants in Bridgeport.



Ablely managed by Mr. E. J. Panish, his son R. P. Panish, and a nucleus of faithful and devoted employees, this concern is doing its share of providing employment for many local residents. It is also contributing effectively to the volume of business in the State of Connecticut by buying supplies and materials from local concerns.

The great multitude of small business concerns form the backbone of this Country's business. Panish Controls is proud to be a cog in the mighty technological machine which has made our Country strong, protects our freedom and guarantees the pursuit of the American way of life.

To serve our Country and fellow men in peace and war has been, and always will be, our greatest privilege and satisfaction.

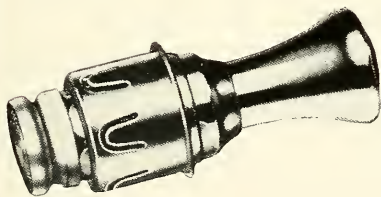
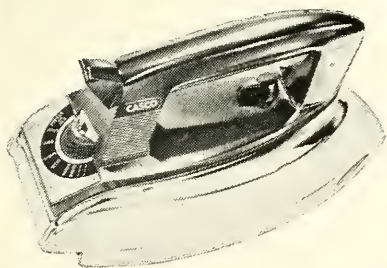


The history and development of Casco Products Corporation centers around the inventive genius of its founder, Joseph H. Cone. The basic philosophy of Mr. Cone, that of producing a high quality product at a reasonable cost, has been the formula for the success of the Corporation established in Bridgeport in 1923 as the Connecticut Automotive Supply Company and later reduced in cognomen to the brevity of C A S C O .

Among the first products were gasoline floats for automobile gas tanks, glass windshield defrosters, ventilating fans, and fender guides. Throughout the years, the most outstanding automotive accessory has been the famous Casco Cigarette Lighter, both manual and automatic. In the late 30's, the Company began manufacturing household items such as Electric Heating Pads and Power Tools.

Throughout World War II, Casco devoted 100% of its efforts to maintaining the same high quality standards in the production of defense material.

During the post-war years, the Company has developed the Casco Steam and Dry Iron, the fully automatic Automobile Antenna and a complete new line of Heating Pads, in addition to constantly doing research in many fields in an attempt to meet with the requirements of the public and add to the Casco line.



CASCO PRODUCTS CORPORATION - BRIDGEPORT



EVERT EDGAR

THE MODEL TOOL CO. was founded in 1945 by Evert Edgar and Gunnar Lindquist, and was first located at 113 Jetland Street.

The plant originally made Jigs, Fixtures, General Tool Work and Plastic Mold Dies, but as business progressed, the decision was made to specialize in Plastic Mold Dies.



GUNNAR LINDQUIST

In 1952 came the need for a larger plant to meet the requirements of the expanding business, and in the summer of that year the company moved to their present site at 233 Bennett Street.

THE MODEL TOOL CO.

233 BENNETT STREET

BRIDGEPORT

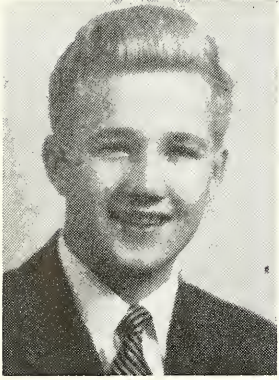
JOSEPH A. CASERTA

UNITED TOOL COMPANY

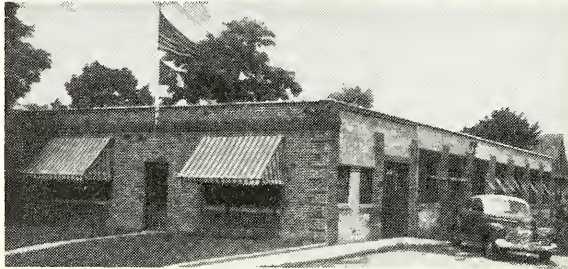
170 BENNETT STREET

Black Rock

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT



GEORGE W. HULTGREN



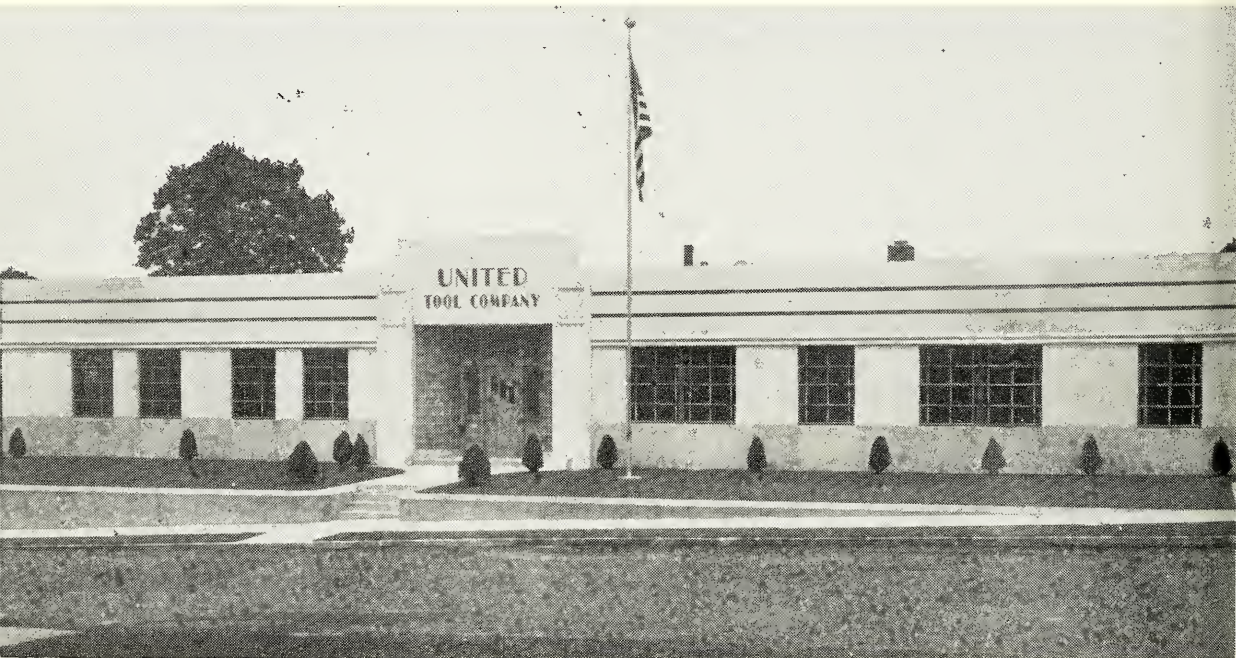
1941 - 1942



ERIC G. HULTGREN

UNITED TOOL COMPANY was founded in 1941 by Eric G. Hultgren, and a small brick building was erected at the present location. In March, the same year, the Company started operating—Manufacturing Plastic Molds.

During the war years, 1942-1945, it was engaged in making tools and parts for defense. After the war, the Company resumed manufacturing Plastic Molds for civilian use, which was rapidly increasing. Therefore, in 1946-1947, the plant was enlarged and remodeled to a more modern factory with additional office space and drafting room. Also, the tool room was expanded to increase manufacturing of Plastic Molds.



1946 - 1947

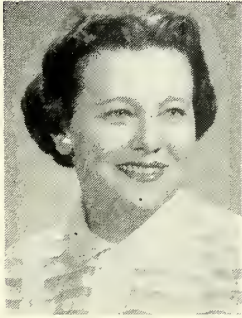
In 1951-1952 a building was added to provide for molding of Plastic Parts.

TODAY

This modern plant is equipped to do engineering, tooling, and molding of a finished plastic product. United Tool Company is owned and operated by Eric G. Hultgren and son, George W. Hultgren.

WELLNER INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

(DEPARTMENT STORE OF INSURANCE)



DOROTHY SACHS
Secretary



GUNNARD F. WELLNER
President



CHARLES C. KUSSMAUL
Treasurer

This Agency had its origination in Black Rock and through the acquisition of other agencies has served Bridgeport and vicinity for over 75 years.

We are happy to have been a part of, and shared in the progress of Black Rock . . . and the Black Rock Civic and Business Men's Club.



122 BANK STREET

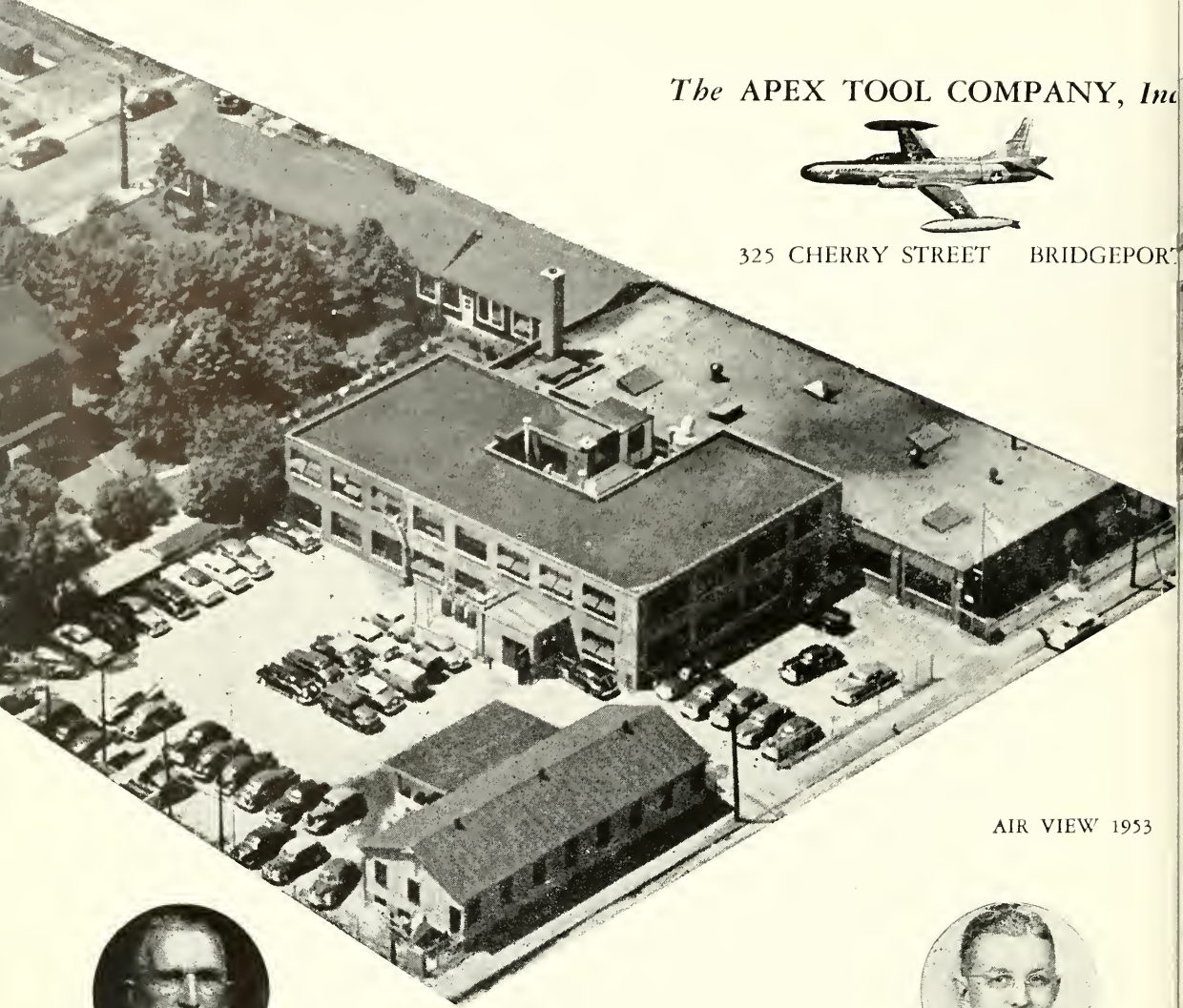
EDison 3-2101

BRIDGEPORT

The APEX TOOL COMPANY, Inc



325 CHERRY STREET BRIDGEPORT



AIR VIEW 1953



SVEN SWANSON

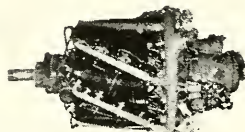


SIGURD B. SWANSON

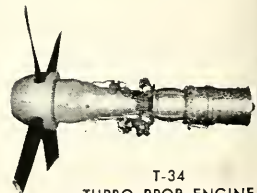
The Apex Tool Company, Inc., was founded in 1923 by Sigurd B. Swanson together with his father, Sven Swanson, and incorporated in 1929. The original plant was located at 652 State Street, and it was later moved to 52 Remer Street in 1928. In 1941 a new plant was erected at 325 Cherry Street. The first building contained 7800 square feet and after several additions there are now 35,000 square feet of manufacturing space. After a few years spent in making parts in the automotive field for the Locomobile, Durant, Flint, Princeton and other cars the company marketed the Lindemark Tool Holder. When this holder was sold in 1933 the company manufactured the Whitney Stoker until 1939. In that year the company entered the aircraft industry and is currently making engine and other aircraft parts for many of the larger companies. Starting with a few employees in 1923 the employment in 1954 numbers 165.



J-57
TURBOJET ENGINE



R-4360
WASP MAJOR ENGINE



T-34
TURBO PROP ENGINE



BENNETT STREET PLANT



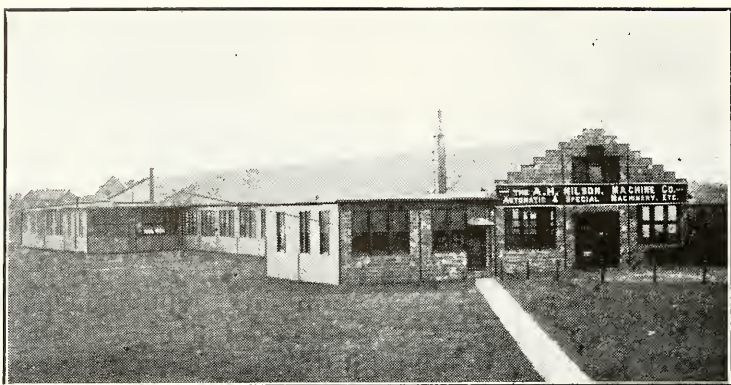
FOX STREET WAREHOUSE

The Electric Maintenance Service Co., Inc., was founded in 1918 by Walter N. Burr and was located at 175 Cannon Street. The principal business was the repairing of electric motors and generators. As time went on the sale of new and rebuilt electric motors were added to the repairing business, also control, electric hoisting equipment, V-belt sheaves, belts and many other items.

In 1925 the plant was moved to 679 Warren Street and by 1937 it became necessary to erect a two-story building in the rear of 679 Warren Street, also a large warehouse was built at 100 Fox Street.

In 1941 this location was outgrown and the plant moved to its present site at 143 Bennett Street in Black Rock, which is connected with the Fox Street warehouse.

ELECTRIC MAINTENANCE SERVICE CO., Inc.
 143 BENNETT STREET
 BRIDGEPORT 5, CONN.



A. H. NILSON

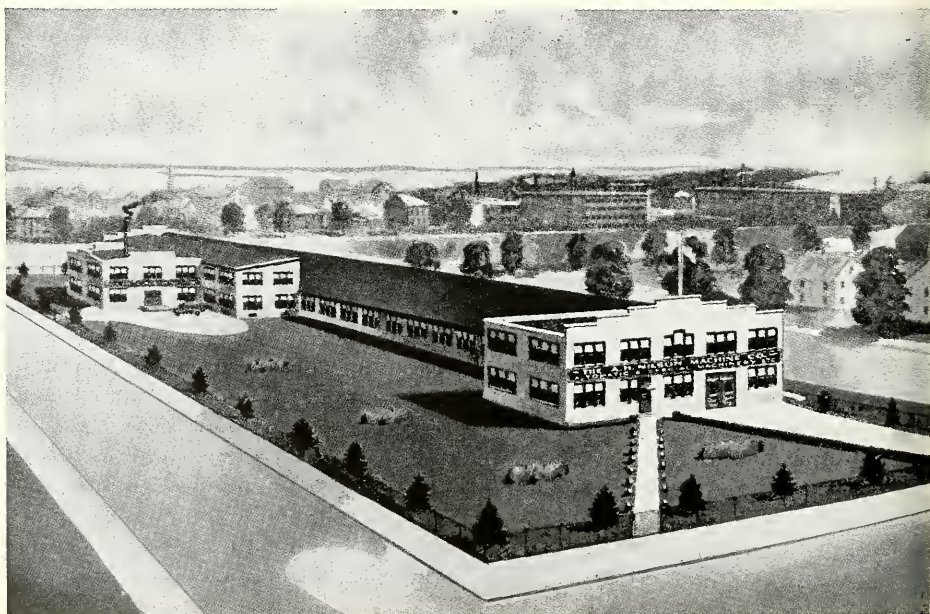
..... a Pioneer

Immigrating from Sweden to this country in 1880, Mr. Axel N. Nilson was among the early Swedish settlers in our city. As such, and particularly after the establishment of The A. H. Nilson Machine Co. in 1898, he became host and guide to the many fellow Swedes who followed.

Early machines were designed and built for the Corset and Piano Hardware manufacturers. However, automatic wire forming equipment, particularly the Fourslide machine, soon became the established line. The wisdom of this choice has been shown in its ever widening application in the metal working industry.

TODAY, Nilson Automatic Fourslide Forming Machines are recognized as an outstanding product by prominent manufacturers of wire forms and small metal stampings throughout the world.

The A. H. NILSON MACHINE CO.
1525 RAILROAD AVENUE



THE BRIDGEPORT CASKET HARDWARE CO.

122-32 BENNETT STREET

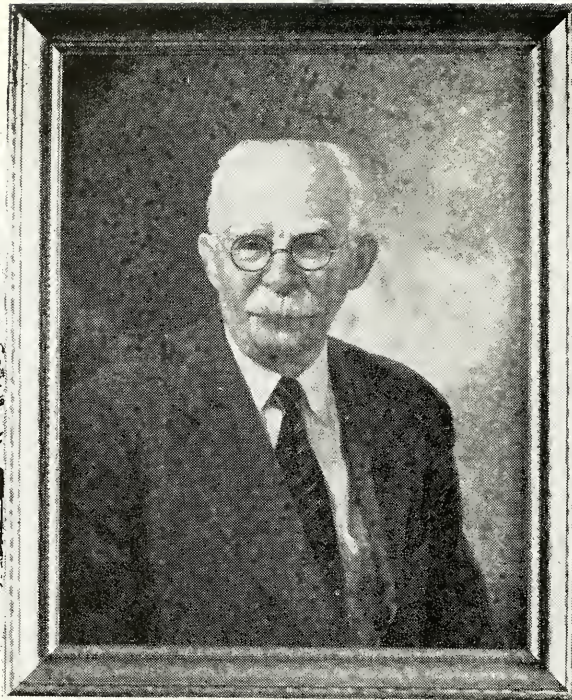
BRIDGEPORT 5, CONNECTICUT



THE BRIDGEPORT CASKET HARDWARE CO., INC., was started in 1921 by Louis J. Standish and the late John Pastor, both long-time Black Rock residents. Starting "small"—in Mr. Pastor's garage—it wasn't long before the need of more space, resulted in moving to a building on Hancock Avenue. Within a year business prospered to the extent that still larger quarters were needed. It was then that the plant moved to a two-story building on Brothwell Street. By 1929 they had also outgrown this building and returned to the heart of Black Rock, to their present location at 122 Bennett Street.

All during this period the firm was striving to develop the reputation of being the "QUALITY HOUSE" in its field, in line with Bridgeport's reputation as the home of top-quality manufacturing firms, a great many of which are in Black Rock. It has been gratifying to achieve this goal, for today when a casket manufacturer is selecting the handles, crucifixes, or name plates to be used with his caskets, when he wants "top quality" he orders it from "Bridgeport!" Louis J. Standish, Jr. and Theodore Pastor, sons of the founders, are carrying on the traditions set up by their fathers.

Twenty employees are kept busy making distinctive casket trimmings in one of the more unusual manufacturing businesses in Black Rock, Bridgeport of the United States (there are only twenty-two casket hardware manufacturers in the entire country!)



J. L. LUCAS, Founder

LUCAS...and BLACK ROCK

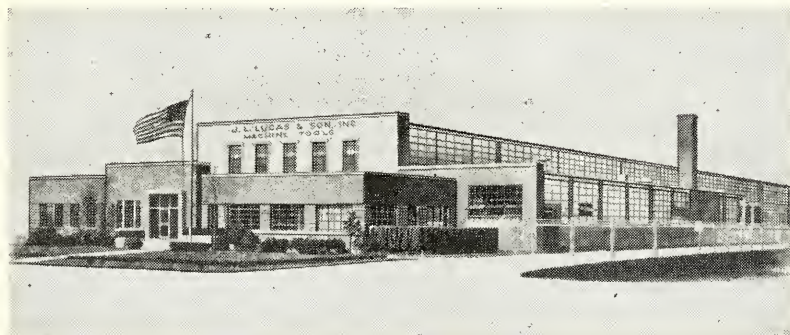
THE GROWTH OF A BUSINESS IN A GROWING COMMUNITY...

Lucas is proud to have played an integral part in the history of a community so well founded in tradition.

In 1905, our first plant on Fox Street was a small wooden structure across the street from the home of J. L. Lucas, founder of the company. This building, as orders for machine tool rebuilding increased, was added to and new structures erected on adjacent lots. But the company continued to grow, until finally in 1941, it was

found necessary to move from the Black Rock location to its present site on the Post Road in Fairfield.

Today, the modern plant, specifically designed for machine tool rebuilding, is one of the finest of its kind in the world. And even as Black Rock continues to grow today, adding to its fine traditions, so the Lucas company, with its own traditions founded in Black Rock, continues progress and prosper.



●
**NEW & REBUILT
MACHINE TOOLS**
●

The Plant from Which Expertly Rebuilt Machine Tools are Shipped to All Parts of the World

J. L. LUCAS & SON, INC. — POST ROAD — FAIRFIELD

“A BETTER DEAL AT ESQUIRE”

ESQUIRE MOTORS, INC.

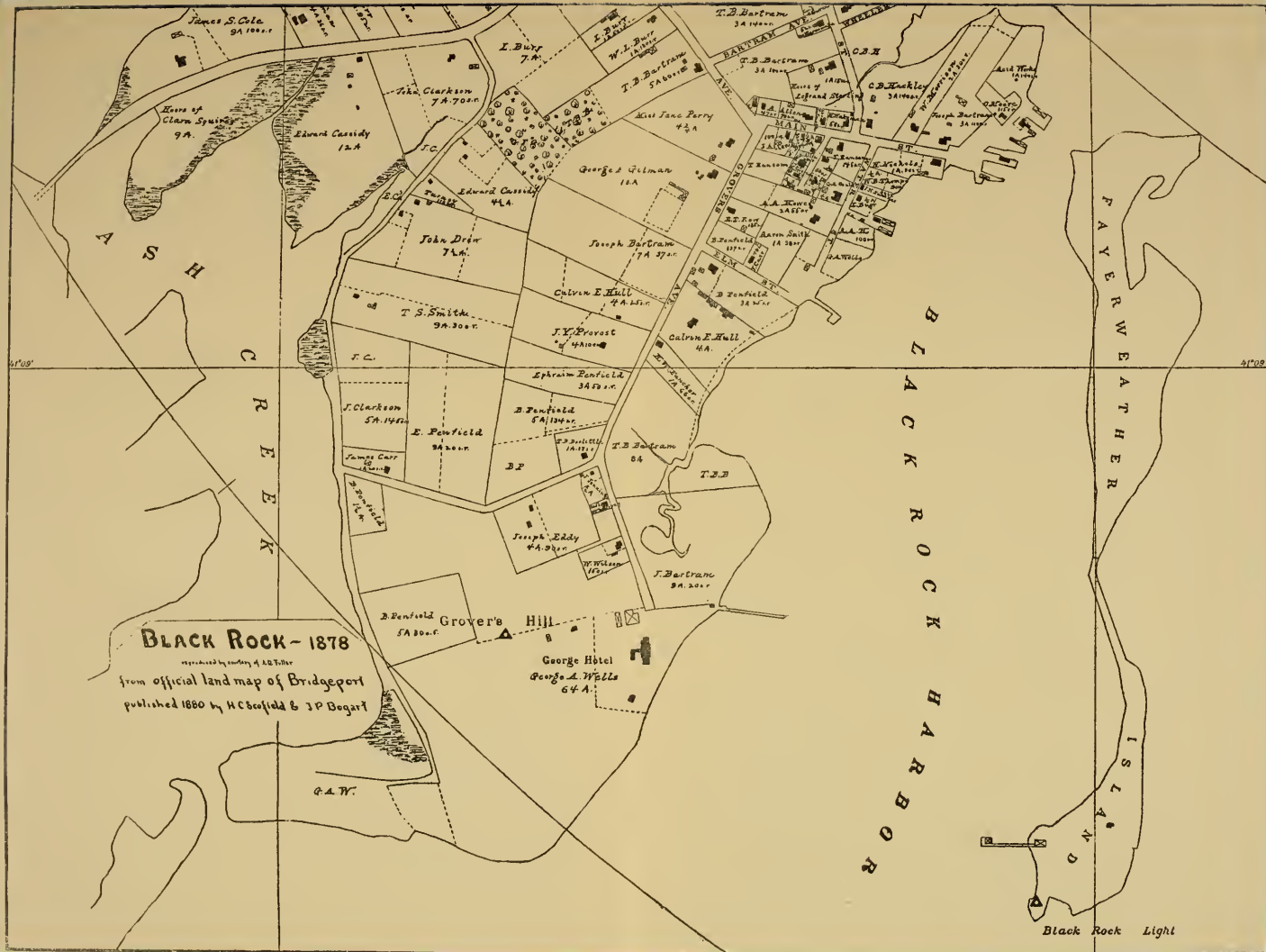
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